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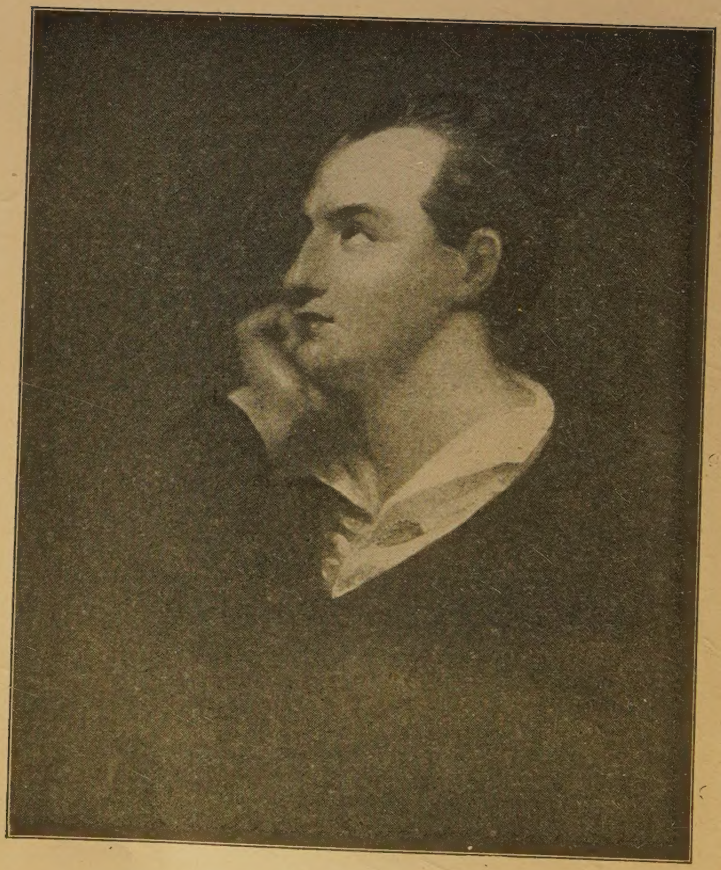

Byron

THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS

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S. S. McCLURE

VOL. XVI

POETRY AND DRAMA

McKinlay, Stone & Mackenzie

J. M. CLELAND

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Poetry and Drama

JOSEPH ADDISON

Cato: A Tragedy

Persons in the Drama

CATO, LUCIUS, *and* SEMPRONIUS, *Senators*
JUBA, *Prince of Numidia*
SYPHAX, *General of the Numidians*
PORTIUS *and* MARCUS, *Sons of Cato*
DECIUS, *Ambassador from Cæsar*
MARCIA, *Daughter to Cato*
LUCIA, *Daughter to Lucius*
Mutineers, Guards, etc

ACT I

SCENE: *A large hall in the governor's palace at Utica.*

Enter SEMPRONIUS *and* PORTIUS.

SEMPRONIUS: Conspiracies no sooner should be form'd
Than executed. What means Portius here? [*aside*
Good morrow, Portius; let us once embrace,
Once more embrace, while yet we both are free.

Joseph Addison was born on May 1, 1672. He distinguished himself at Oxford, and in 1694 made his first flight in English verse with an "Address to Dryden," by which he gained the poet's friendship. He was presently employed as a writer by the Ministry, and rose by successive steps till, in 1717, he was made one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state. It was during this time that his best literary work was produced. The exact date when "Cato" was written remains uncertain. The subject was possibly suggested to Addison by a piece dealing with Cato's death, which he saw played at Venice in 1701. The

PORTIUS: My father has this morning call'd together,
To this poor hall, his little Roman senate
(The leavings of Pharsalia), to consult
If he can yet oppose the mighty torrent
That bears down Rome, and all her gods before it.
SEMPRONIUS: Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence.
Could I but call that wondrous man my father,
Would but thy sister Marcia be propitious
To thy friend's vows, I might be bless'd indeed!
PORTIUS: Alas, Sempronius! wouldst thou talk of love
To Marcia whilst her father's life's in danger?
SEMPRONIUS: The more I see the wonders of thy race,
The more I'm charm'd. Thou must take heed, my Portius;
The world has all its eyes on Cato's son.
PORTIUS: Well do'st thou seem to check my ling'ring here
On this important hour—I'll straight away,
I'll animate the soldiers' drooping courage
With love of freedom and contempt of life;
'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it. [*Exit.*
SEMPRONIUS: Curse on the stripling! how he apes his sire!
Ambitiously sententious—But I wonder
Old Syphax comes not.

Enter SYPHAX.

SYPHAX: Sempronius, all is ready;
I've sounded my Numidians, man by man,

---

play is famous for its passages of declamation, and has been translated into French, German, Latin and Italian. Pope, who wrote the prologue, Swift, who attended one of the rehearsals, Steele, who offered to pack a house for his friend, and Bolingbroke, who made a famous present of fifty guineas to the leading actor, were all associated with the first production of the work.

And find them ripe for a revolt: they all
Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,
And wait but the command to change their master.

SEMPRONIUS: Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to waste;
Ev'n while we speak our conqueror comes on,
And gathers ground upon us every moment.
Alas! thou know'st not Cæsar's active soul,
With what a dreadful course he rushes on.
The Alps and Pyreneans sink before him;
Through winds and waves and storms he works his way,
Impatient for the battle; one day more
Will set the victor thund'ring at our gates.
But, tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar,
And challenge better terms.

SYPHAX: He's lost, Sempronius; all his thoughts are full
Of Cato's virtues—but I'll try once more.

SEMPRONIUS: Once more be sure to try thy skill on Juba.
Meanwhile, I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,
Inflame the mutiny, and underhand
Blow up their discontents, 'till they break out
Unlook'd for, and discharge themselves on Cato.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MARCIA, LUCIA *and* JUBA.

JUBA: Hail, charming maid! How does thy beauty smooth
The face of war, and make ev'n horror smile!

MARCIA: I should be griev'd, young prince, to think my presence
Unbent your thoughts, and slacken'd 'em to arms.

JUBA: Oh, Marcia, let me hope thy kind concerns
And gentle wishes follow me to battle!
The thought will give new vigour to my arm.

MARCIA: My pray'rs and wishes always shall attend
The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,
And men approv'd of by the gods and Cato.
JUBA: Thy reproofs are just,
Thou virtuous maid; I'll hasten to my troops,
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue.
[*Exit* JUBA.
LUCIA: How could you chide the young, good-natur'd prince
And drive him from you with so stern an air,
A prince that loves and dotes on you to death?
MARCIA: 'Tis therefore, Lucia, that I chide him from me.
His air, his voice, his looks, and honest soul
Speak all so movingly in his behalf.
LUCIA: Why have not I this constancy of mind,
Who have so many griefs to try its force?
MARCIA: Lucia, disburthen all thy cares on me;
Tell me who raises up this conflict in thee?
LUCIA: I need not blush to name them, when I tell thee
They're Marcia's brothers, and the sons of Cato.
MARCIA: Oh, Lucia, I'm perplex'd. Oh, tell me which
I must hereafter call my happy brother?
LUCIA: Suppose 'twere Portius, could you blame my choice?
Oh, Portius, thou hast stol'n away my soul!
With what a graceful tenderness he loves!
Marcus is over-warm, his fond complaints
Have so much earnestness and passion in them
I tremble at his vehemence of temper.
MARCIA: Alas, poor youth! How will thy coldness raise
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom!
LUCIA: Was ever virgin love distrest like mine!
Portius himself oft falls in tears before me,
As if he mourn'd his rival's ill-success.
MARCIA: Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows,

But to the gods submit th' event of things;
Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,
May still grow bright, and smile with happier hours.

Act II

Scene: *The Senate.*

Enter Decius.

Decius: Cato, I've orders to expostulate
And reason with you, as from friend to friend:
Do but comply and make your peace with Cæsar,
Rome will rejoice, and cast its eyes on Cato,
As on the second of mankind.
Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues:
Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship,
And name your terms.
Cato: Bid him disband his legions,
Restore the commonwealth to liberty,
Submit his actions to the public censure,
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate.
Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.
Myself will mount the rostrum in his favour,
And strive to gain his pardon from the people.
Decius: Consider, Cato, you're in Utica,
And at the head of your own little senate;
You don't now thunder in the Capitol,
With all the mouths of Rome to second you.
Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar,
For all his gen'rous cares and proferr'd friendship?
Cato: His cares for me are insolent and vain:
Presumptuous man! the gods take care of Cato.
Decius: Your high unconquer'd heart makes you forget
You are a man. You rush on your destruction.
But I have done. [*Exit* Decius.

CATO: Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.
LUCIUS: Cato, we all go into your opinion.
Cæsar's behaviour has convinc'd the senate
We ought to hold it out till terms arrive.
SEMPRONIUS: We ought to hold it out till death; but, Cato,
My private voice is drown'd amidst the senate's.
CATO: Then let us rise, my friends.
[*Exeunt* SENATORS. *Enter* JUBA.
Juba, the Roman Senate has resolv'd.
Till time gives better prospects, still to keep
The sword unsheath'd, and turn its edge on Cæsar.
JUBA: The resolution fits a Roman senate;
But, Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,
And condescend to hear a young man speak.
Had we not better leave this Utica,
To arm Numidia in our cause, and court
Th' assistance of my father's powerful friends?
CATO: And can'st thou think
Cato would fly before the sword of Cæsar!
Reduc'd like Hannibal, to seek relief
From court to court!
JUBA: Cato, perhaps
I'm too officious; but my forward cares
Would fain preserve a life of so much value.
CATO: Thy nobleness of soul obliges me.
But know, young prince, that valour soars above
What the world calls misfortune and affliction.
These are not ills; else would they never fall
On Heav'n's first fav'rites and the best of men.
JUBA: The best good fortune that can fall on Juba,
The whole success at which my heart aspires,
Depends on Cato.
CATO: What would'st thou say?
JUBA: Cato, thou hast a daughter.
CATO: Adieu, young prince; I would not hear a word
Should lessen thee in my esteem. Remember

It is not now a time to talk of aught
But chains, or conquest; liberty, or death.

[*Exit.*

Enter SYPHAX.

SYPHAX: How's this, my prince! What, cover'd with confusion?
You look as if yon stern philosopher
Had just now chid you.
JUBA: I've open'd to him
The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia.
—Oh! I could pierce my heart,
My foolish heart. Was ever wretch like Juba!
SYPHAX: Young prince, I yet could give you good advice.
Marcia might still be yours.
Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops:
Give but the word, we'll snatch this damsel up,
And bear her off.
The boasted ancestors of these great men,
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians.
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds
All under Heav'n, was founded on a rape.
JUBA: Syphax, I fear that hoary head of thine
Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles.
SYPHAX: Indeed, my prince, you want to know the world.
You have not read mankind.
JUBA: If knowledge of the world makes man perfidious,
May Juba ever live in ignorance.
SYPHAX: Go, go; you're young.
JUBA: Gods, must I tamely bear
This arrogance unanswer'd! Thou'rt a traitor.
Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.
SYPHAX: Must one rash word, th' infirmity of age,

Throw down the merit of my better years?
This the reward of a whole life of service!
JUBA: Thou know'st the way too well into my heart:
I do believe thee loyal to thy prince.
SYPHAX: What better instance can I give? I've offer'd
To do an action which my soul abhors,
And gain you whom you love, at any price.
JUBA: Syphax, I know thou lov'st me; but indeed
Thy zeal for Juba carried thee too far.
Give me thy hand; we'll mutually forget
The warmth of youth, and frowardness of age.
[*Exit.*
SYPHAX: Young men soon give, and soon forget affronts;
Old age is slow in both—A false old traitor!—
These words, rash boy, may chance to cost thee dear.

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

SEMPRONIUS: I've practis'd with the messenger from Cæsar,
And found a means to let the victor know
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.
Is Juba fix'd?
SYPHAX: Yes—but it is to Cato.
SEMPRONIUS: Come, 'tis no matter; we shall do without him.
He'll make a pretty figure in a triumph.
Syphax, I now may hope thou hast forsook
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.
SYPHAX: May she be thine as fast as thou would'st have her.
Make Cato sure, and give up Utica,
Cæsar will ne'er refuse thee such a trifle.
But are thy troops prepar'd for a revolt?
SEMPRONIUS: All, all is ready.
The factious leaders are our friends, that spread
Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers;

Within an hour they'll storm the Senate House.
SYPHAX: Meanwhile, I'll draw up my Numidian troops
Within the square, to exercise their arms,
And as I see occasion, favour thee.

Prose Summary

Encouraged by Sempronius, Cato's Roman soldiers break out into mutiny. But awed by an eloquent and scathing speech by their commander, they plead for mercy, which is granted them on condition that they surrender their leaders, who are handed over to Sempronius for immediate execution. Meantime, the conspirators' first design having proved abortive, Sempronius resolves first to carry off Marcia, and then to join Syphax in his flight with the Numidian cavalry to Cæsar's camp. But in an attempt to penetrate to Marcia's apartments disguised as Juba, he is confronted by Juba himself and slain, while the grief expressed by Marcia on discovering what she at first takes to be the dead body of the man she loves, suffices to reveal to the prince the happy news that his passion is returned.

ACT III

Enter CATO *and* LUCIUS.

LUCIUS: I stand astonish'd! What! the bold Sempronius,
That still broke foremost thro' the crowd of patriots,
As with a hurricane of zeal transported!
CATO: Our civil discords have produc'd such crimes,
Such monstrous crimes, I am surpris'd at nothing.
—Oh, Lucius, I am sick of this bad world!
The daylight and the sun grow painful to me.

Enter PORTIUS.

But see where Portius comes; what means this haste?
PORTIUS: The traitor Syphax, as within the square
He exercis'd his troops, the signal given,
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse

To the fourth gate, where Marcus holds the watch.
I saw, and call'd to stop him, but in vain.
CATO: Perfidious man! But haste, my son, and see
Thy brother Marcus act a Roman's part.

[*Exit* PORTIUS.

—Lucius, the torrent bears too hard on me:
Justice gives way to force: the conquer'd world
Is Cæsar's! Cato has no business in it.
But see young Juba; the good youth appears,
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects!

Enter JUBA.

JUBA: I blush and am confounded to appear
Before thy presence, Cato.
CATO: What's thy crime?
JUBA: I'm a Numidian.
CATO: And a brave one, too. Thou hast a Roman soul.
JUBA: Hast thou not heard of my false countrymen?
CATO: Alas, young prince!
Falsehood and fraud shoot up in every soil,
The product of all climes—Rome has its Cæsars.

Enter PORTIUS.

PORTIUS: Misfortune on misfortune! Grief on grief!
My brother Marcus——
CATO: Did he look tamely on, and let 'em pass?
PORTIUS: Scarce had I left my father, but I met him
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,
Breathless and pale, and cover'd o'er with wounds.
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,
He stood the shock of a whole host of foes.
CATO: I'm satisfi'd.
PORTIUS: Nor did he fall before
His sword had pierc'd through the false heart of Syphax.
LUCIUS: Oh, Cato, arm thy soul with all its patience;
See where the corpse of thy dead son approaches!

CATO *meeting the corpse.*

CATO: Welcome, my son! Here lay him down, my friends,
Full in my sight, that I may view at leisure
The bloody corse, and count those glorious wounds.
—How beautiful is death, when earn'd by virtue!
Who would not be that youth? What pity is it
That we can die but once to serve our country!
JUBA: Was ever man like this?
CATO: Alas, my friends,
Why mourn you thus! let not a private loss
Afflict your hearts. 'Tis Rome requires our tears,
The mistress of the world, the seat of empire,
The nurse of heroes, the delight of gods,
That humbled the proud tyrants of the earth,
And set the nations free. Rome is no more.
How is the toil of fate, the work of ages,
The Roman Empire, fall'n! Oh, curst ambition!
Fall'n into Cæsar's hands! Our great forefathers
Had left him naught to conquer but his country.
LUCIUS: Cato, 'tis time thou save thyself and us.
CATO: Lose not a thought on me; I'm out of danger;
Heav'n will not leave me in the victor's hand.
Cæsar shall never say he conquer'd Cato.
But, oh, my friends, your safety fills my heart
With anxious thoughts.
LUCIUS: Cæsar has mercy if we ask it of him.
CATO: Then ask it, I conjure you! let him know
Whate'er was done against him, Cato did it.
Add, if you please, that I request it of him,
The virtue of my friends may pass unpunish'd.
Farewell, my friends! If there be any of you
Who dare not trust the victor's clemency,
Know there are ships prepar'd by my command,
That shall convey you to the wish'd-for port.
The conqueror draws near. Once more farewell!

If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet
In happier climes, and on a safer shore,
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.
There the brave youth, with love of virtue fir'd,
[*Pointing to his dead son.*
Who greatly in his country's cause expir'd,
Shall know he conquer'd. The firm patriot there,
Who made the welfare of mankind his care,
Tho' still by faction, vice, and fortune crost,
Shall find the gen'rous labour was not lost.
[*Exeunt.*

Act IV

Cato (*solus*), *sitting in a thoughtful posture; in his hand Plato's book on the Immortality of the Soul, a drawn sword on the table by him.*

Cato: Thus am I doubly armed: my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me.
This in a moment brings me to an end;
But this informs me I shall never die.
The soul, secur'd in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years,
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.

Enter Portius.

But, hah! how's this, my son? Why this intrusion?
Portius: Oh, sir! forgive your son,
Whose grief lies heavy on him. O my father,
How am I sure it is not the last time
I e'er shall call you so!

CATO: Weep not, my son, all will be well again;
The righteous gods, whom I have sought to please,
Will succour Cato, and preserve his children.
Portius, thou may'st rely upon my conduct:
Thy father will not act what misbecomes him.
My soul is quite weigh'd down with care, and asks
The soft refreshment of a moment's sleep.
[*Exit* CATO.

Enter MARCIA.

PORTIUS: Oh, Marcia, oh, my sister, still there's hope!
Our father will not cast away a life
So needful to us all, and to his country.
He is retir'd to rest, and seems to cherish
Thoughts full of peace. [*Exit* PORTIUS.
MARCIA: Oh, ye immortal powers, that guard the just,
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose.

Enter LUCIA.

LUCIA: Where is your father, Marcia, where is Cato?
MARCIA: Lucia, speak low, he is retir'd to rest.
Lucia, I feel a gentle dawning hope
Rise in my soul. We shall be happy still.
LUCIA: Alas! I tremble when I think on Cato!
In every view, in every thought, I tremble!
Cato is stern and awful as a god.
MARCIA: Though stern and awful to the foes of Rome,
He is all goodness, Lucia, always mild;
The kindest father I have ever found him.
LUCIA: 'Tis his consent alone can make us bless'd.
The cruel hand of fate that has destroyed
Thy brother Marcus, whom we both lament,
Has set my soul at large, and now I stand
Free of my choice. But who knows Cato's thoughts!
MARCIA: Let him but live, commit the rest to Heav'n.

Enter LUCIUS.

LUCIUS: Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man!
Oh, Marcia, I have seen thy god-like father;
Some power invisible supports his soul,
And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.

Enter JUBA.

JUBA: Lucius, the horsemen are return'd from viewing
The number, strength, and posture of our foes,
Who now encamp within a short hour's march.
LUCIUS: Marcia, 'tis time we should awake thy father.
Cæsar is still dispos'd to give us terms,
And waits at distance 'till he hears from Cato.

Enter PORTIUS.

PORTIUS: Oh, sight of woe!
Oh, Marcia, what we fear'd is come to pass!
Cato is fall'n upon his sword.
I've raised him up,
And placed him in his chair, where, pale and faint,
He gasps for breath, and as his life flows from him,
Demands to see his friends.

[CATO *brought in on a chair.*

CATO: Portius, come near me. Are my friends embark'd?
Can any thing be thought of for their service?
—Oh, Lucius, art thou there? Thou art too good—
Make Portius happy in thy daughter Lucia.
Oh, bend me forward! Juba loves thee, Marcia.
A senator of Rome, while Rome surviv'd,
Would not have match'd his daughter with a king,
But Cæsar's arms have thrown down all distinction;
Whoe'er is brave and virtuous is a Roman—
—I'm sick to death. Oh, when shall I get loose
From this vain world, th' abode of guilt and sorrow?

[*Dies.*

LUCIUS: There fled the greatest soul that ever warm'd
A Roman breast; Oh, Cato! Oh, my friend,
Thy will shall be religiously observ'd!
But let us bear this awful corpse to Cæsar,
And lay it in his sight, that it may stand
A fence betwixt us and the victor's wrath;
Cato, tho' dead, shall still protect his friends.

ÆSCHYLUS

The Agamemnon

Persons in the Drama

AGAMEMNON
CLYTÆMNESTRA, *his wife*
ÆGISTHUS, *her paramour*
CASSANDRA, *Princess of Troy*
CHORUS *of Argive Elders*
HERALD

ACT I

The scene of the tragedy is laid at Argos, the royal seat of the Atridæ, before the palace of AGAMEMNON, *where his wife,* CLYTÆMNESTRA, *and her paramour,* ÆGISTHUS, *son of* THYESTES, *have plotted to murder him when Troy falls, and he returns. The young heir,* ORESTES, *is living, though not at Argos, to become one day his father's avenger. Signal fires have announced to the watchmen and to* CLYTÆMNESTRA *that Troy has fallen. The stage is unoccupied when the* CHORUS *enters, unconscious of the news.*

CHORUS: The tenth slow year rolls on since, great in arms,
The noble sons of Atreus, each exalted
To majesty and empire, royal brothers,

Æschylus, the father of Greek tragedy, was born at Eleusis, near Athens, in 525 B.C. He won the tragic prize on many occasions, though in 468 B.C. he was defeated by his younger rival, Sophocles (see Vol. XVIII, p. 237), who had won the support of the Democrats. In all, some sixty plays are ascribed to him, but only about seven have survived. These are ample, however, to

Led hence a thousand ships, the Argive fleet,
Big with the fate of Priam and of Troy.
But we, age-worn, inglorious here must bide.
[CLYTÆMNESTRA, *with a solemn and silent procession, enters and kindles sacrificial fires on altars before the palace.*]
Then, their brave hosts marching in firm array,
The heroes led the way,
  Till in each royal chieftain's view
  A royal eagle whirls his flight,
  In plumage one of dusky hue,
  And one his dark wings edged with white,
Swift to the imperial mansions take their way,
  And in their armèd talons bear,
  Seized in its flight, a pregnant hare;
And in those splendid seats enjoy their prey.
Mournfully, mournfully sing—let the good be victor.
The seer, in high prophetic strains,
The ravening eagles and their prey explains:
"Though Priam's town lie low,
  Fear we the wrath of Artemis
  Demanding other sacrifice.
A mother brooding on a daughter's woe."

---

indicate the grandeur and beauty of his imagination, and the tragic force of his verse. Æschylus died in 455 B.C., at Gela, in Sicily. The "Agamemnon" is the first of the Trilogy, or group of three connected tragedies, in which Æschylus portrays the culmination of the legend of the house of the Pelopidæ, the doom that must be dreed in expiation of a ghastly crime—the murder by Atreus of the children of his brother, Thyestes, to whom their flesh was served for a banquet. The more recent events in that history, prior to the opening of the drama, but vividly present to the mind of every spectator in the Athenian audience, are the flight of Helen, wife of Menelaus, one of the two Atridæ, with his Trojan guest, Paris; the gathering of the Grecian hosts to sail for Troy and exact vengeance; the sacrifice by Agamemnon, brother of Menelaus and chief of the army, of his daughter, Iphigenia, to appease the wrath of the goddess Artemis, who had stayed the armament; and the ten years' absence of the Grecian princes and warriors at the long siege.

Mournfully, mournfully sing—let the good be victor.
(*to* CLYTÆMNESTRA): Great queen, if aught of import glad hath reached
Thine ear, I fain would hear.
CLYTÆMNESTRA: The town of Priam
This night has fallen before our conquering arms.
CHORUS: Nay, but what messenger could speed so fast?
CLYTÆMNESTRA: The Fire-god, flaming bright on Ida's crest;
Beacon to beacon flashed the courier-blaze—
Ida to Hermes' crag on Lemnos isle;
And the great island bonfire, Athos Point,
The mount of Zeus, the third in order caught,
And, tow'ring high to skim the waste of waters,
It fed the speeding flare with joyous strength—
A shining brand that tossed the golden beam
Sunlike to a watcher on Macistus' height;
Thence to Euripus' and Messapius' warders,
The mighty torch unflagging leaped the plain
Of far Asopus, like a gleaming moon
On to Cithæron's rock, and roused once more
A fresh successor of the news-fraught glare.
Across the mere Gorgopis flashed the light
To Aegiplanctus; thence, with strength undimmed,
A giant beard of blaze, its flame o'er-leaped
The cliff that frowns on the Saronic strait.
Then, it darted, then at length attained
Arachne's crag, the post hard by our town;
So lighted last here on our royal roof
The fiery heir of Ida's flame begotten.
Even now the conquered, doomed to servitude,
Wailing, embrace with tears their slaughtered kin;
Let not the conquerors then arouse the wrath
Of the high gods by sacrilegious deeds.
Nor the Omnipotent Vengeance smite them down.
[*Exit* CLYTÆMNESTRA.

CHORUS: Thine, Zeus that reignest, thine the Hand we own;
The Almighty Justice willed, and it was done.
Paris thy great behest defied,
And from his host stole, impious, his bride;
And, bold in sin, to Troy's devoted shore
Destruction for her dowry bore.

Nevertheless, a nameless tormenting doubt, a dark presentiment of evil, haunts the Chorus. The war was righteous; yet the people, whose sons have perished before Troy, feel the quarrel to be none of theirs. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." And may not the queen herself have been misled? This last doubt, however, is dispelled by the entrance of a herald from Agamemnon as Clytæmnestra re-enters.

ACT II

HERALD: Hail, thou paternal soil of Argive earth,
Hail, thou loved land; hail, thou bright sun; and thou
Great guardian of my country, Zeus the King;
Thou, Phœbus, hail, thy shafts no longer winged
For our destruction.
Ye, if e'er of old
Those eyes with favour have beheld the king,
Receive him now, after this length of time,
With glory; greet him well; such is his meed,
The mighty king that with the mace of Zeus,
The avenger, wherewith he subdues the earth,
Hath levelled with the dust the towers of Troy.
CLYTÆMNESTRA: Soon from the king's own lips shall I learn all.
How best I may receive my honoured lord,
And grace his wished return, now claims my care.
Can Heaven's fair beam show a fond wife a sight
More grateful than a husband from his wars
Returned with glory, when she opes the gate
And springs to welcome him? Tell my lord this,
That he may hasten his desired return;

Say, ten long years have not effaced the seal
Of my strong constancy, as true and pure
As virgin metal in the mine's deep heart. [*Exit.*

CHORUS: Of Sparta's king fain would I question thee.

HERALD: Him from the Grecian fleet our eyes have lost,
The hero and his ship. This is the truth.
Lost—in a storm that rent him from the fleet.
My tidings are of conquest and success,
Diffusing joy; with these glad sounds, how mix
Distress, and speak of storms and angry gods?
Tell how, in a night of tempest wild from Thrace
In all their fury rushed the howling winds;
Tossed by the forceful blasts, ship against ship
In hideous conflict crashed, or disappeared,
Driven at the boisterous whirlwind's dreadful will?
[*Exit.*

CHORUS: Is there in names a charm profound
That tells us of their fates assigned—
Mysterious potency of sound
With strange prophetic truth combined?
Affianced in contention, led,
The spear her dowry, to her bridal bed,
With desolation in her train,
Helen, the Hell of warriors, ships, and towers,
From the rich fragrance of her gorgeous bowers
Descending to the main,
Hastens to spread her flying sails
And calls the earth-born zephyr's gales.
While heroes, breathing vengeance, snatch their shields
And track her light oars o'er the pathless waves
To the thick shades fresh waving o'er those fields
Which Simois with his silver windings laves.
The woodman, from his thirsty lair,
Reft of his dam a lion bore;
Fostered his future foe with care
To mischiefs he must soon deplore:

Gentle and tame while young,
Harmless he frisked the fondling babes among;
  Oft in the father's bosom lay,
  Oft licked his feeding hand in fawning play;
Till, conscious of his firmer age,
  His lion race the lordly savage shows;
  No more his youth-protecting cottage knows,
But with insatiate rage
  Flies on the flocks, a baleful guest,
  And riots in the unbidden feast,
While through his mangled folds the hapless swain
  With horror sees the unbounded carnage spread;
And learns too late that from the infernal reign
  A priest of Ate in his house was bred.

Act III

Agamemnon *now enters with his train. By his side is the captive princess of Troy,* Cassandra, *on whom* Apollo *had bestowed in anger the fatal gift that she should ever prophesy truth, yet none should believe her prophecies or comprehend her warnings. The* Chorus *render him loyal greetings, with a warning note.*

Agamemnon: To Argos first, and to my country's gods
I bow with reverence, by whose holy guidance
On Troy's proud towers I poured their righteous vengeance,
And now revisit safe my native soil.
For this we render grateful thanks to them.
Ye have said well, in greeting and in warning—
Few have the fortitude of soul to honour
A friend's success without some touch of envy.
Yea, this I know, that many who in public
Have borne the semblance of my firmest friends

Are but the flattering image of a shadow
Reflected from a mirror. [*Enter* CLYTÆMNESTRA.

CLYTÆMNESTRA: In your presence,
Most reverend friends and fellow-citizens,
A wife's fond love I blush not to disclose.
For a weak woman in her husband's absence,
Pensive to sit and lonely in her house,
'Tis dismal listening to each frightful tale.
First one alarms her, then another comes
Charged with worse tidings. Such reports oppressed me,
Till life became distasteful, and my hands
Were prompted oft to deeds of desperation.
Yet now the fountains of my tears are dried,
Save that mine eyes are weak with midnight watchings,
Wearying for my dear lord. But all is now
Forgotten, all, when I behold my king,
My guardian, the strong anchor of my hope,
The stately column that supports my house,
Welcome as land to storm-tossed mariners,
Welcome as day after a night of tempests,
As bubbling fount to thirsty wayfarer.
Now from thy chariot, dearest lord, descend;
Yet set not on the bare base earth that foot,
The royal foot, beneath whose mighty tread
Troy trembled! Haste ye, maidens, spread the ground
With purple tapestries rich and rare, to grace
In seemly wise the pathway of the king.

AGAMEMNON: Laud me not thus with gushing girlish praises,
Nor as some arrogant barbarian king
That loves loud acclamations echoing round
From prostrate slaves; spread me no tapestries,
Nor pay to a mortal man the honours due
To immortal gods alone.

CLYTÆMNESTRA: Nay, dearest lord,
Grant me this boon; so let me—will you not?—
Claim conquest of the conqueror of Troy.

AGAMEMNON: Have then thy wish; yet not with buskined feet
I'll tread those purple carpets, lest I stir
Some god to wrath, presumptuous.
Gently entreat
This stranger; for the gods approve the victor
That bears himself not proudly; since none wears
Of his free choice the yoke of servitude.

CLYTÆMNESTRA: Zeus, the Fulfiller! Zeus, my prayers fulfil!
Yea, care for all that thou art to fulfil.

The king and queen enter the palace, leaving Cassandra without, with the Chorus. Again a vague foreboding dread is voiced in the choric song. Clytæmnestra re-enters.

CLYTÆMNESTRA: Thou, too, Cassandra, enter; since high Zeus
Hath set thee of his grace, in this our house,
A slave with many another, thy proud spirit
Must somewhat stoop. Alcmena's mighty son
Bowed to such yoke perforce. What, silent still?
Unheeding? If thou wilt subdue thy mind,
Delay not. If thy tongue knows not to frame
Our foreign speech, make sign. Nay, then, 'tis frenzy.
I tarry here no more to be disdained.
[*Exit* CLYTÆMNESTRA.

ACT IV

CHORUS: Pity, not anger, is her meed. Poor soul,
Forsake thy chariot, unreluctant learn
To bear this new yoke of necessity.

CASSANDRA: Woe, woe! O Earth! Apollo, ah, Apollo!

CHORUS: That wailing cry fits not with Apollo's name.

CASSANDRA: Woe, woe! O Earth! Apollo, ah, Apollo!
Fatal, once more thou lead'st me to my doom.
Ah, whither hast thou led me, to what house?

CHORUS: Thou know'st not? 'Tis the palace of the Atridæ.

CASSANDRA: It is a mansion hated by the gods,
A charnel-house, reeking with human gore.
Look! Look! The witnesses! The murdered children,
The father feasting on their roasted flesh!
Ah, God! What horrible new intent is hers?

CHORUS: The olden tale we know, but what is this?

CASSANDRA: False, false! Thy wedded lord, with limbs new-bathed—
Ah! blow on blow! see, see the paramour,
The net! Howl, howl, fell pack that haunts the race.

CHORUS: What Fury calls she? Some blind horror grips me.

CASSANDRA: The heifer thrusts her horns in the bull's side;
Down in the chaldron, lo! he falls, he falls.
Me too, me too, unhappy! Is it for this,
For this, that thou hast brought me here, to die?

[*The prophetic trance passes.* CASSANDRA *turns to the Chorus.*]

No longer veiled, like to a new-made bride,
My words shall hide their import. Witness ye!
I have found the scent of a crime wrought long ago
I hear the voices of the avenging band
That sup on blood, fell haunters of the house
Where, foully wronged, a brother wronged as foully
The brother that wronged him. Bear witness then
I know to the uttermost that tale of sin.

CHORUS: In sooth we marvel that, being born and bred
In a distant land, such knowledge can be thine.

CASSANDRA: This gift, this doom, Apollo laid on me.
He sought, I fained to yield, yet dared repulse him;
So am I doomed ever to warn in vain.
Ah! Ah! Again the frenzy! Lo, their ghosts,
Ghosts of dead children, holding up to view
Their mangled limbs, the horrible repast

Of their unconscious sire. For this, for this
That lurking coward now plots his fell revenge,
Who, while the lion-monarch fought afar,
Made foul his lair. But he, Troy's conqueror,
He knows not what she dares, glib with fond words.
Murderess, she-dragon, Scylla—filled with hate.

CHORUS: Thyestes' feast with shuddering fear we know;
The rest is darkness.

CASSANDRA: Agamemnon's death—

CHORUS: Be still! The ill-omened word begets the deed.

CASSANDRA: Apollo, ah, Apollo! I burn, I burn!
The lioness with her wolf-paramour
Will slay me too. Away! Off, off, ye trappings,
Laurel and fillets of the Pythoness,
Apollo's mocking guerdon. I shall die—
Exile and matricide, the Avenger comes
One day, God's instrument. To meet my doom
I go, nor tarry.

CHORUS: Wherefore starts she back?

CASSANDRA: The smell of blood and death breathes from the house
Noisome and rank as issuing from the grave.
O mighty Sun-god! Make the vengeance sure.

She passes into the house. The Chorus still cannot grasp the meaning of her warning. There comes a sudden cry.

AGAMEMNON (*within*): Ah me, I am stricken to death!

CHORUS: What cry is this?

AGAMEMNON: Again! Again! Oh, foully, foully murdered.

The truth at last breaks upon the Chorus. For a few moments there is a scene of wild confusion, a clamour of cries.

CHORUS: Summon the citizens! Rush in at once,
Seize them red-handed. Act at once! Do something—

We cannot bring the dead to life. What then?
Bow to the murderous tyrants? Rather die!
Cease guessing: go we in and know the truth.

Act V

The interior of the palace is revealed, with the corpses of Agamemnon *and* Cassandra, Clytæmnestra *standing by them.*

Clytæmnestra: Ye have heard me speak fair words. Now unashamed
I do belie those words. Who seeks revenge
Makes vengeance sure by wearing friendship's guise.
This was no hasty rash-conceived design,
But formed with deep premeditated thought.
Incensed with wrongs, each single step I planned.
No chance had he to struggle or resist,
Entangled in the gorgeous robe that shone
Fatally rich. I struck him twice, and twice
He groaned—then died. A third time, where he lay,
I thrust him through. Is it not a welcome gift
To that stern god that in the realms below
Reigns o'er the dead? There let him take his seat.
He lay, and, spouting from his wounds, a stream
Of blood bedewed me with these crimson drops,
Grateful to me, as to the genial earth,
The pattering rain-drops. Wherefore, reverend sirs,
Rejoice with me! For his injurious pride
Filled for this house the cup of desolation—
Fated himself to drain it to the dregs.
I fear not you. There Agamemnon lies,
My husband, slaughtered by my hand. I dare
Avow his death, and justify my deed.

Chorus: Accursed the hand that struck. A people's wrath
Shall in just vengeance burst upon thy head.

CLYTÆMNESTRA: No blame for him that sacrificed his child,
My child for whom I bore a mother's pangs?
Me ye judge, him ye judge not. Are ye stronger?
Use then your might! If not, be wise in time.
Ægisthus stands by me, my shield and strength;
There lies the man that wronged me, with his minion.
CHORUS: Helen and Clytæmnestra, fatal sisters!
Dread spirit that haunt'st the house, dost thou rejoice?
CLYTÆMNESTRA: Ye deem the deed was mine; not so, in sooth;
Say the avenging Fury wrought his doom.
CHORUS: No more in single drops the shower of blood
Descends, but one red torrent shakes the walls.
CLYTÆMNESTRA: We mourn him not, but on the further shore
Iphigenia with a daughter's kiss
Greets fondly her fond father.
CHORUS: Yet the son
Succeeds the father; who shall drive him hence?
[*Enter Ægisthus.*]
ÆGISTHUS: Hail, joyful day, whose welcome light brings vengeance!
For that foul wrong wrought to my sire Thyestes
By Atreus, this man's father, I designed
For him this righteous doom, planned all, wrought all.
CHORUS: Therefore, Ægisthus, shalt thou not escape
When with stern justice the avenging people
Shall hurl their stones on thine accursed head.
ÆGISTHUS: Hark how the galley-slave rebukes the pilot!
Old fool, hunger and chains are sovereign physic
For proud hearts. Look! and tremble, and contend not.
CHORUS: Coward and murderer! Shalt thou reign in Argos?
Help, every friend! Upon him with the sword!
ÆGISTHUS: My sword is out: Ægisthus dares to die.

CHORUS: Prophetic be thy words! We hail the omen!
CLYTÆMNESTRA: Sweet love, let not new ills be heaped on ills;
Enough of vengeance now, enough of blood.
While still ye may, old man, go home in peace.
What hath been done, the rigour of the times
Compelled us to.
ÆGISTHUS: Ay, but to hear this babbler,
It moves me from the firmness of my temper.
CHORUS: Yet shall the just gods lead Orestes home.
CLYTÆMNESTRA: Nay, heed them not. Come in, and order all.

The Persians

Persons in the Drama

ATOSSA, *Queen-Dowager of Persia, mother of Xerxes*
XERXES, *King of Persia*
GHOST OF DARIUS, *late King*
MESSENGER
CHORUS, *The Persian Council of State*

CHORUS: Whilst o'er the fields of Greece the embattled troops
Of Persia march with delegated sway,
We o'er their rich and gold-abounding seats
Hold faithful our firm guard; to this high charge
Xerxes, our royal lord, the imperial son

This, the oldest extant drama of the world, was produced in the great stone theatre of Athens in the year 472 B. C. Only eight years before, Athens had been destroyed and burnt by the Persians. With a million troops and four thousand ships Xerxes had invaded Greece, had cut to pieces Leonidas and his Spartan heroes at Thermopylæ, and had burnt Athens; then

Of great Darius, chose our honoured age.
But for the king's return, and his armed host
Blazing with gold, my soul, presaging ill,
Swells in my tortured breast: for all her force
Hath Asia sent, and for her youth I sigh.

Chorus describes how the great cities Susa and Ecbatana had poured forth their martial trains, and how, among others

Amestris, Artaphernes, and the might
Of great Astaspes, Megabazus bold,
Chieftains of Persia, kings that to the power
Of the Great King obedient, march with these,
Leading their martial thousands; their proud steeds
Prance under them; steel bows and shafts their arms,
Dreadful to see, and terrible in fight. . . .
Others the prolific Nile hath sent.
. . . Next these the Lycian troops—
Soft sons of luxury; and those that dwell
Amidst the inland forests, from the sea
Far distant; these Metragathes commands
And virtuous Arceus, royal chiefs that shine
In burnished gold, and many a whirling car
Drawn by six generous steeds from Sardis lead,
A glorious and a dreadful spectacle.
. . . A mingled multitude
Swept from her wide dominions, skilled to draw
Th' unerring bow, in ships Euphrates sends
From golden Babylon. With falchions armed

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the Athenian fleet had turned the tide by defeating the Persians at Salamis; the land battle at Platæa, with the sea-battle at Mykale, which together followed on the same day, had completed the rout; and the Greeks had followed the beaten and retreating Persians to Byzantium, now Constantinople, and had there beaten them again. Æschylus himself had borne arms in the famous battles of Marathon, Artemisium, Salamis and Platæa. The scene is laid in the Persian capital, Susa, outside the state council-chamber and near the tomb of Darius, whom Xerxes had succeeded some years before "The Persians" was produced.

From all th' extent of Asia move the hosts
Obedient to their monarch's stern command.
Thus marched the flower of Persia. . . .

The stage direction "Strophe I." signifies that the Chorus next turn to the left side of the theatre, and chant:

Already o'er the adverse strand
In arms the monarch's martial squadrons spread;
The threat'ning ruin shakes the land,
And each tall city bows its towered head.
Barque bound to barque, their wondrous way
They bridge across th' indignant sea;
The narrow Hellespont's vexed waves disdain,
His proud neck taught to wear the chain.
Now has the peopled Asia's warlike lord,
By land, by sea, with foot, with horse,
Resistless in his rapid course
O'er all their realms his warring thousands poured;
Now his intrepid chiefs surveys,
And, glittering like a god, his radiant state displays.

Chorus then turns to the right side of the house to sing the antistrophe:

Fierce as the dragon scaled in gold
Through the deep files he darts his glowing eye;
And pleased their order to behold,
His gorgeous standard blazing to the sky,
Rolls onward his Assyrian car,
Directs the thunder of the war,
Bids the wing'd arrows' iron storm advance
Against the slow and cumbrous lance.
What shall withstand the torrent of his sway,
When dreadful o'er the yielding shores
Th' impetuous tide of battle roars
And sweeps the weak-opposing mounds away?
So Persia with resistless might
Rolls her unnumbered hosts of heroes to the fight.

Another strophe and antistrophe follow, and Chorus calls the council to consult upon the war, when the queen, Atossa, approaches, welcomed by a short chant from the "whole Chorus." The queen has had ominous dreams, and is anxious regarding the fate of her son. Chorus advises her:

Go, then, address the gods;
If thou hast seen aught ill, entreat their power
T'avert that ill, and perfect every good
To thee, thy sons, the state, and all thy friends.
Then to the earth, and to the mighty dead
Behoves thee pour libations; gently call
Him that was once thy husband, whom thou saw'st
In visions of the night; entreat his shade
From the deep realms beneath to send to light
Triumph to thee and to thy son. . . .

While queen and Chorus are conferring, the messenger enters with the tidings of woe, telling how

In heaps th' unhappy dead lie on the strand
Of Salamis, and all the neighbouring shores.

Xerxes himself lives, but this and that brave chief lies low, one spear-pierced, another dashed upon the rocks, and so on; while

. . . . Matallus, Chrysa's chief
That led his dark'ning squadrons, thrice ten thousand,
On jet black steeds, with purple gore distained
The yellow of his thick and shaggy beard.

The messenger then describes the Battle of Salamis, beginning by showing the disparity of the forces by way of proving that now

The walls of Athens are impregnable;
Their firmest bulwarks her heroic sons.

The messenger explains how Xerxes was induced to divide his vast fleet by a cunning stratagem of the Greeks, an Anthenian having pretended to disclose to him the secret intention of the Greek Navy to seek safety in flight. The Persian King immediately sent his ships to guard all the channels around Salamis, only to find when morning dawned that, instead of fleeing, the

Greeks meant battle. They sang the pæan of war, sounded the trumpet, and then the sharp-beaked war galleys were rowed upon the foe, to crash upon their boats and sink them.

With impetuous force
Dashed the resounding surges, instant all
Rushed on in view; in orderly array
The squadron on the right first led, behind
Rode their whole fleet; and now distinct we heard
From every part this voice of exhortation:
"*Advance! ye sons of Greece, from thraldom save*
Your country, save your wives, your children save,
The temples of your gods, the sacred tomb
Where rest your honoured ancestors; this day
The common cause of all demands your valour!"
Meantime from Persia's hosts the deep'ning shout
Answered their shout; no time for cold delay,
But ship 'gainst ship its brazen beak impelled.
First to the charge a Grecian galley rushed;
Ill the Phœnician bore the rough attack,
Its sculptured prow all shattered. Each advanced
Daring an opposite. The deep array
Of Persia at the first sustained th' encounter;
But their thronged numbers, in the narrow seas
Confined, want room for action; and deprived
Of mutual aid beaks clash with beaks, and each
Breaks all the other's oars: with skill disposed
The Grecian Navy circles them around
With fierce assault; and rushing from its height
The inverted vessel sinks: the sea no more
Wears its accustomed aspect, with foul wrecks
And blood disfigured; floating carcases
Roll on the rocky shores; the poor remains
Of the barbaric armament to flight
Ply every oar inglorious; onward rush
The Greeks amidst the ruins of the fleet,
As through a shoal of fish caught in a net
Spreading destruction: the wide ocean o'er

Wailings are heard, and loud laments, till night
With darkness on her brow brought grateful truce.

The messenger relates how Xerxes had sent his land army to an island near Salamis on which he calculated the defeated Greeks would seek shelter, expecting to "hew them down an easy conquest,"

. . . but when the fav'ring god to Greece
Gave the proud glory of this naval fight,
Instant in all their glittering arms they leapt
From their light ships, and all the island round
Encompassed, that our bravest stood dismayed;
Whilst broken rocks, whirled with tempestuous force,
And storms of arrows, crushed them; then the Greeks
Rush to the attack at once, and furious spread
The carnage, till each mangled Persian fell.
Deep were the groans of Xerxes when he saw
This havoc; for his seat, a lofty mound
Commanding the wide sea, o'erlooked his hosts.
With rueful cries he rent his royal robes,
And through his troops embattled on the shore
Gave signal of retreat; then started wild
And fled disordered.

The Persian queen, bewailing the ruined host and the vengeful intentions of Xerxes which had been thus defeated, retires to offer prayers to the gods and libations to the dead; while the Chorus, in strophe, antistrophe, and epode, chant their lamentations. The queen, returning with libations of milk, honey, wine, olives and flowers to pour to the gods, ask the Chorus to invoke the dead king, Darius; and the Chorus thereupon supplicates "the powers that guide the dead," and especially the gods of night and Hermes, "chief, tremendous king," to send Darius to disclose the decree of "Fate," while Darius himself is adjured:

Great and good Darius, rise:
  Lord of Persia's lord, appear,
Thus invoked with thrilling cries
  Come, our tale of sorrow hear!

The Ghost of Darius rises, and on the stage carries on a colloquy with Atossa.

GHOST: No more 'gainst Greece lead your embattled hosts;
Not though your deepening phalanx spreads the field
Outnumbering theirs: their very earth fights for them.

The ex-king Darius attributes the defeat of the Persians to the fact that Xerxes, in the pride of youth, had listened to youthful counsels and forgotten his father's commands. He tells his queen and Chorus that of the Persians still left in Greece few shall ever return to Persia, since

. . . . Misery waits to crush them with the load
Of heaviest ills, in vengeance for their proud
And impious daring; for whene'er they held
Through Greece their march, they feared not to profane
The statues of the gods; their hallowed shrines
Emblazed, o'erturned their altars, and in ruins
Rent from their firm foundations, to the ground
Levelled their temples. Such their frantic deeds,
Nor less their sufferings: greater still await them;
For vengeance hath not wasted all her stores,
The heap yet swells: for in Platæa's plains
Beneath the Doric spear the clotted mass
Of carnage shall arise, that the high mounds
Piled o'er the dead, to late posterity
Shall give this silent record to men's eyes,
That proud aspiring thoughts but ill beseem
Weak mortals: for oppression when it springs
Puts forth the blade of vengeance, and its fruit
Yields a ripe harvest of repentant woe.

With a further admonition to pride to remember that jealous attempts against another's prosperity are displeasing to God, and sure to awake his vengeance, the ghost of Darius begs the queen to receive Xerxes with gentlest courtesy, notwithstanding his ruinous error, and departs. Atossa, declaring that:

. . . Ne'er in his woes
Will I forsake whom my soul holds most dear

leaves the stage to meet her son Xerxes, and after a dirge upon the departed glory of Persia, sung by the Chorus in two strophes and antistrophes, Xerxes appears.

XERXES: Ah, me, how sudden have the storms of fate,
Beyond all thought, all apprehension, burst
On my devoted head! Oh, Fortune, Fortune!
With what relentless fury hath thy hand
Hurled desolation on the Persian race!
Woe unsupportable! The torturing thought
Of our lost youth comes rushing on my mind
And sinks me to the ground. Oh, Jove, that I
Had died with those brave men that died in fight!

CHORUS: O thou afflicted monarch, once the lord
Of marshalled armies, of the lustre beamed
From glory's ray o'er Persia, of her sons
The pride, the grace, whom ruin now hath sunk
In blood! Th' unpeopled land laments her youth
By Xerxes led to slaughter, till the realms
Of death are gorged with Persians; for the flower
Of all the realm, thousands, whose dreadful bows
With arrowy shower annoyed the foe, are fall'n.

XERXES: Your fall, heroic youths, distracts my soul.

CHORUS: And Asia sinking on her knee, O king,
Oppressed, with griefs oppressed, bends to the earth.

XERXES: And I, O wretched fortune, I was born
To crush, to desolate my ruined country.

CHORUS: I have no voice, no swelling harmony,
No descant, save these notes of woe,
Harsh, and responsive to the sullen sigh,
Rude strains, that unmelodious flow,
To welcome thy return.

XERXES: Then bid them flow, bid the wild measures flow
Hollow, unmusical, the notes of grief;
They suit my fortune, and dejected state.

CHORUS: Yes, at thy royal bidding shall the strain
Pour the deep sorrows of my soul . . .

XERXES: To my grieved memory thy mournful voice
Tuned to the saddest notes of woe, recalls
My brave friends lost; and my rent heart returns

In dreadful symphony the sorrowing strain. . . .
Ah, me! the once great leaders of my host
Low in the earth, without their honours lie.
CHORUS: . . . . Unutterable woe
The demons of revenge have spread;
And Até from her drear abode below
Rises to view the horrid dead.
XERXES: Dismay, and rout, and ruin, ills that wait
On man's afflicted fortune, sink us down.
CHORUS: Dismay, and rout, and ruin on us wait,
And all the vengeful storms of fate.
Ill flows on ill, on sorrows sorrows rise;
Misfortune leads her baleful train;
Before th' Ionian squadrons Persia flies,
Or sinks engulfed beneath the main:
Fall'n, fall'n, is her imperial power,
And conquest on her banners waits no more.
XERXES: At such a fall, such troops of heroes lost
How can my soul but sink in deep despair?
Cease thy sad strain.
CHORUS: Is all thy glory lost?
XERXES: Seest thou these poor remains of my rent robes?
CHORUS: I see, I see . . .
I thought these Grecians shrunk appalled at arms?
XERXES: No, they are bold and daring; these sad eyes
Beheld their violent and deathful deeds.
CHORUS: The ruin, sayest thou, of thy shattered fleet?
XERXES: And in the anguish of my soul I rent
My royal robes.
CHORUS: Woe, woe!
XERXES: And more than woe.
CHORUS: Redoubled, threefold woe!
XERXES: Disgrace to me,
But triumph to the foe.
CHORUS: Are all thy powers
In ruin crushed?

XERXES: No satrap guards me now.
CHORUS: Thy faithful friends sunk in the roaring main.
XERXES: Weep, weep their loss, and lead me to my house;
Answer my grief with grief, an ill return
Of ills for ills. Yet once more raise that strain
Lamenting my misfortunes; beat thy breast,
Strike, heave the groan, awake the Mysian strain
To notes of loudest woe; rend thy rich robes,
Pluck up thy head, tear off thy hoary locks
And bathe thine eyes in tears: thus through the streets
Solemn and slow with sorrow lead my steps;
Lead to my house, and wail the fate of Persia.
CHORUS: Yes, once more at thy bidding shall the strain
Pour the deep sorrows of my soul;
The suff'ring of my bleeding country 'plain,
And bid the Mysian measures roll.
Again the voice of wild despair
With shrilling shrieks shall pierce the air;
For high the god of war his flaming crest
And Persia's withered force confounded;
The haughty arms of Greece with conquest blest
And Persia's withered force confounded;
Dashed on the dreary beach her heroes slain,
Or whelmed them in the darkened main.

Prometheus Bound

Persons in the Drama

PROMETHEUS. IO. STRENGTH *and* FORCE. OCEANUS. VULCAN. MERCURY. CHORUS: *Nymphs of the Ocean.*

STRENGTH: At length, then, to the wide earth's extreme bounds,
To Scythia are we come, those pathless wilds
Where human footsteps never marked the ground.
Now, Vulcan, to thy task; at Jove's command
Fix to these high-projecting rocks this vain
Artificer of man; each massy link
Draw close, and bind his adamantine chains.
Thy radiant pride, the fiery flame, that lends
Its aid to every art, he stole, and bore
The gifts to mortals; for which bold offence
The gods assign him this just punishment;
That he may learn to reverence the power
Of Zeus, and moderate his love to man.

In this great effort of his sombre genius we have one of the last of the dramas which Æschylus wrote for Athens. He retired from Athens in 468 B.C., having lost touch with the new democratic régime. It was in that year, or very shortly before, that Æschylus brought out his "Prometheus Bound." In the character of Prometheus he expresses his scorn of the paltry anthropomorphic gods whom the ignorant populace accepted. "Prometheus Bound" is the only one remaining to us of the three plays in which Æschylus treated the character of Prometheus. The name Prometheus means "forethought." Zeus, the "new" king of the gods, despised mortals, and would have destroyed them to make a new race; but Prometheus stole fire from heaven and gave it to the human race, to whom he also imparted the secret of various useful arts. Zeus, thus defeated, ordered Vulcan and Strength to chain Prometheus to the Caucasus rock. Io, the mortal priestess of whom Zeus had become enamoured, and whom Zeus's wife, Hera, had punished for her husband's partiality by changing her into a beautiful heifer, appears as a character, driven through the world by a gadfly. The single scene of "Prometheus Bound" is the rock.

VULCAN: Stern powers, your harsh commands have here an end,
Nor find resistance. My less hardy mind,
Averse to violence, shrinks back, and dreads
To bind a kindred god to this wild cliff
Exposed to every storm; but strong constraint
Compels me; I must steel my soul and dare:
Jove's high commands require a prompt observance.
High-thoughted son of truth-directing Themis,
Thee with indissoluble chains, perforce,
Must I now rivet to this savage rock,
Where neither human voice, nor human form
Shall meet thine eye, but parching in the beams,
Unsheltered, of yon fervid sun, thy bloom
Shall lose its grace, and make thee wish th' approach
Of grateful evening mild, whose dusky stole,
Spangled with gems, shall veil his fiery heat;
And night upon the whitening ground breathe frore,
But soon to melt, touched by his orient ray.
So shall some present ill with varied pain
Afflict thee; nor is he yet born whose hand
Shall set thee free: thus thy humanity
Receives its meed, that thou, a god, regardless
Of the gods' anger, honouredst mortal man
With courtesies, which justice not approves.
Therefore the joyless station of this rock
Unsleeping, unreclining, shalt thou keep,
And many a groan, many a loud lament
Throw out in vain, nor move the rigourous breast
Of Jove, relentless in his youthful power.

STRENGTH: No more; why these delays, this foolish pity? . . .

VULCAN: Yet wish I it had been some other's lot.

STRENGTH: All have their lot appointed, save to reign in heaven, for liberty is Jove's alone.

VULCAN: Truth guides thy words, nor have I to gainsay.

STRENGTH: Why thus reluctant then to bind.
Let not thy sire observe these slow delays . . .
Severe his eye who nicely scans these works.

Thus urged, Vulcan completes his work, and, with a departing taunt to Prometheus, Strength and the others leave the victim:

Now triumph in thy insolence, now steal
The glory of the gods, and bear the gift
To mortal men: will they relieve thee now?

PROMETHEUS (*alone*): Ethereal air, and ye swift-winged winds,
Ye rivers springing from fresh founts, ye waves
That o'er th' interminable ocean wreathe
Your crispèd smiles, thou all-producing earth,
And thee, bright sun, I call, whose flaming orb
Views the wide world beneath, see what, a god,
I suffer from the gods; with what fierce pains,
Behold, what tortures for revolving ages
I here must struggle; such unseemly chains
This new-raised ruler of the gods devised.
Ah, me! That groan bursts from my anguished heart,
My present woes and future to bemoan.
When shall these sufferings find their destined end?
But why that vain inquiry. My clear sight
Looks through the future; unforeseen no ill
Shall come on me. Behooves me then to bear
Patient my destined fate, knowing how vain
To struggle with necessity's power. . . .

While Prometheus, so firmly bound that he cannot turn to look around, is thus soliloquising, he hears the approach of the sea-nymphs, daughters of Oceanus.

PROMETHEUS: . . . What sound, what softly breathing odour
Steals on my sense? Be you immortal gods
Or mortal men, or of th' heroic race,
Whoe'er have reached this wild rock's extreme cliff
Spectators of my woes, or what your purpose,
Ye see me bound, a wretched god, abhorred

By Zeus and every god that treads his courts
For my fond love to man. Ah, me, again,
I hear the sound of flutt'ring; the air
Pants to the soft beat of light-moving wings . . . .

Chorus, whose eyes are "surcharged with sorrow's tearful rain," expresses her feminine sympathy with Prometheus. Zeus alone, she says, can joy in his despair; but Zeus's stern severity tames even the gods.

And he will tame them, till some power arise
To wrest from his strong hand the sceptre of the skies.
PROMETHEUS: Yet he, e'en he
That o'er the gods holds his despotic reign
And fixes this disgraceful chain,
Shall need my aid, the counsels to disclose
Destructive to his honour and his throne.
But not the honied blandishment that flow
From his alluring lips shall aught avail;
His rigid menaces shall fail.
Nor will I make the fatal secret known
Till his proud hands this galling chain unbind,
And his remorse soothes my indignant mind.
CHORUS: Bold and intrepid is thy soul,
Fired with resentment's warmest glow,
And thy free voice disdains control,
Disdains the torturing curb of woe.
My softer bosom, filled with fear
Lest heavier ills await thee here,
By milder counsels wishes thee repose:
For Jove's relentless rage no tender pity knows.

Questioned by the nymph, Prometheus tells her how, when there was a conspiracy in heaven to dethrone Saturn and seat Zeus in his place, the Titans had urged the use of force to seize the sceptre of the sky; but that he, Prometheus, having often been told by his goddess mother—

That not by violence, that not by power,
But gentle arts the royalty of heaven
Must be obtained.

had then aided the cause of Zeus against the Titans, only to be repaid by his present punishments.

For foul mistrust of those that serve them best
Breathes its black poison in each tyrant's heart.
CHORUS: And is no bound prescribed to thy affliction?
PROMETHEUS: None else, but when his own will shall incline him.
CHORUS: Who shall incline his will? Hast thou no hope?
Dost thou not see that thou hast much offended?
But to point out th' offence, to me were painful,
And might sound harsh to thee: forbear we then;
Bethink thee how thine ills may have an end.
PROMETHEUS: How easy, when the foot is not entangled
In misery's thorny maze, to give monitions
And precepts to th' afflicted!

Oceanus, the sea-dog, desirous of helping his relative with sympathy and wise counsel, appears from his home in the waves and the "rock-roofed grottos arched by Nature's hand." Prometheus proclaims the injustice of his suffering.

OCEANUS: I see it all, and wish to counsel thee,
Wise as thou art, to milder measures: learn
To know thyself; new model thy behaviour
As the new monarch of the gods requires.
What if thy harsh and acrid words should reach
The ear of Zeus, though on his distant throne
High-seated? Might they not inflame his rage?
. . . I go, and will exert my power,
If haply I may free thee from thy pains.
Meanwhile be calm; forbear this haughty tone:
Has not thy copious wisdom taught thee this—
That mischief e'er attends the petulant tongue?
PROMETHEUS: I gratulate thy fortune that on thee
No blame hath lighted, though associate with me
In all, and daring equally. But now
Forbear; of my condition take no care;

Thou wilt not move him; nothing moves his rigour:
Take heed, then, lest to go bring harm on thee.
OCEANUS: Wiser for others than thyself I find
Thy thoughts; yet shalt thou not withhold my speed

In a succeeding speech, Oceanus tells how he saw "Earth's monstrous son," Typhon, subdued by Force and confined beneath Mount Ætna.

The furious Typhon, who 'gainst all the gods
Made war; his horrid jaws with serpent-hiss
Breathes slaughter, from his eyes the gorgon-glare
Of baleful lightnings flashed, as his proud force
Would rend from Zeus his empire of the sky.
But him the vengeful bolt, instinct with fire,
Smote sore, and dashed him from his haughty vaunts,
Pierced through his soul, and withered all his strength.
Thus stretched out huge in length beneath the roots
Of Ætna, near Trinacria's narrow sea,
Astonied, blasted, spiritless he lies—
On whose high summit Vulcan holds his seat
And forms the glowing mass. *In times to come*
Hence streams of torrent fire with hideous roar
Shall burst, and with its wasteful mouths devour
All the fair fields of fruitful Sicily.
Such rage shall Typhon, blasted as he is
With Jove's fierce lightning, pour incessant forth
In smoking whirlwinds and tempestuous flame.

Oceanus reminds Prometheus that "soft speech is to distempered wrath medicinal," but is finally dissuaded from mediation with Zeus, and sent back to his grotto, on Prometheus telling him that his "simple policy" will be deemed by Zeus to have been inspired by his victim. As Oceanus departs the Chorus sing a dirge, which moves Prometheus to cry: "It is not pride; deem nobler of me, Virgins!"

PROMETHEUS: . . . The ills of man you've heard: I formed his mind,
And through the cloud of barbarous ignorance
Diffused the beams of knowledge. I will speak,
Not taxing men with blame, but my own gifts

To them displaying, and benevolence.
They saw indeed, they heard; but what availed
Or sight, or sense of hearing, all things rolling
Like the unreal imagery of dreams
In wild confusion mixed? The lightsome wall
Of finer masonry, the raftered roof
They knew not; but like ants still buried, delved
Deep in the earth and scooped their sunless caves;
Unmarked the seasons' change: the biting winter,
The flower-perfumed spring, the ripening summer,
Fertile of fruits. At random all their works,
Till I instructed them to mark the stars,
Their rising, and, a harder science yet,
Their setting. The rich train of marshalled numbers
I taught them, and the meet array of letters.
T'impress these precepts on their hearts I sent
Memory, the active mother of all wisdom.
I taught the patient steer to bear the yoke,
In all his toils joint-labourer with man.
By me the harnessed steed was trained to whirl
The rapid car, and grace the pride of wealth.
The tall barque, lightly bounding o'er the waves,
I taught its course, and winged its flying sail.
To man I gave these arts . . . .
What useful arts, what science I invented!
This first and greatest: when the fell disease
Preyed on the human frame, relief was none,
Nor healing drug, nor cool, refreshing draught,
Nor pain-assuaging unguent; but they pined
Without redress, and wasted, till I taught them
To mix the balmy medicine, of power
To chase each pale disease, and soften pain.
I taught the various modes of prophecy,
What truth the dream portends, the omen what
Of nice distinction, what the casual sight
That meets us on the way, the flight of birds,
When to the right, when to the left they take

Their airy course; their various ways of life,
Their feuds, their fondnesses, their social flocks.
I taught the Haruspex to inspect the entrails,
Their smoothness, and their colour, to the gods
Grateful, the gall, the liver streaked with veins,
The limbs involved in fat, and the long chine
Placed on the blazing altar, from the smoke
And mounting flame to mark th' unerring omen.
These arts I taught. And all the secret treasures
Deep buried in the bowels of the earth:
Brass, iron, silver, gold, their use to man.

CHORUS: Let not thy love to man o'erleap the bounds
Of reason, nor neglect thy wretched state;
So my fond hope suggests thou shalt be free
From these base chains, nor less in power than Zeus.

PROMETHEUS: Not thus, it is not in the Fates that thus
These things should end; crushed with a thousand wrongs,
A thousand woes; I shall escape these chains.
Necessity is stronger far than art.

CHORUS: Who, then, is ruler of Necessity?

PROMETHEUS: The triple Fates and unforgetting Furies.

CHORUS: Must Zeus then yield to their superior power?

PROMETHEUS: He no way shall escape his destined fate.

CHORUS: What but eternal empire is his fate?

PROMETHEUS: Thou may'st not know this now; forbear t'inquire.

Chorus piously hopes that her soul may never defy the all-ruling power of Zeus, and in strophe, antistrophe, and epode the nymphs sing a remonstrance to Prometheus, reminding him that the mortals for whose sake he has defied the monarch of the gods are not worth such daring. While the Epode is being sung Io enters—the "lamenting virgin," whose fate is to roam the world as a heifer.

PROMETHEUS: I hear her griefs, that whirl her soul to madness,
Daughter of Inachus, whose love enflames
The heart of Zeus; hence Hera's jealous rage
Drives the poor wanderer restless o'er the world.

Io relates her story, and begs Prometheus—upon whose "prescient mind" even gods rely—to tell her what more woe can await her; and Chorus seconds her request because to the sick some gleam of comfort may come from a knowledge of the worst in store. Prometheus consents to picture her wanderings, which are but a prelude to greater misfortune.

Io: What then has life desirable? Why rather
From this rude cliff leap I not headlong down,
And end my woes? Better to die at once
Than linger out a length of life in pain.
PROMETHEUS: Ill wouldst thou bear thy miseries, by the Fates
Exempt from death, the refuge of th' afflicted.
But my afflictions know no bounds till Zeus
Falls from the imperial sovereignty of heaven.
Io: Shall he then fall? Shall the time come when Zeus
Shall sink dethroned? I think I should rejoice
To see the tyrant's ruin. Should I not,
Since from his hands I suffer all these ills?
PROMETHEUS: Then be thou well assured it shall be so!
Io: And who shall wrest th' imperial sceptre from him?
PROMETHEUS: Himself, destroyed by his improvident counsels.

In the dialogue which ensues Prometheus informs Io that a future wife of Zeus shall bear him a son greater than himself, that Zeus will have no power to avert his dethronement by the son until Prometheus is set free, and that this release will be effected by a descendant of Io herself, to be born near the banks of the Nile. As Io, onward driven once more by the "maddening smart," moves off the stage, Chorus sings an ode, of which the burden is the quotation:

"Whoe'er thou art, whom young desire
Shall lead to Hymen's holy fire,
Choose, from thy equals choose thy humble love:
Let not the pomp of wealth allure thine eye,
Nor high-traced lineage thy ambition move
Ill suits with low degree t' aspire so high."

PROMETHEUS: Yet shall this Zeus, with all his self-willed pride,
Learn humble thoughts . . .
Let him then sit, and glorying in his height
Roll with his red right hand his volleying thunder,
Falsely secure, and wreathe his bickering flames.
Yet nought shall they avail him, nor prevent
His abject and dishonourable fall.
Such rival adversary forms he now
Against himself, prodigious in his might
And unassailable; whose rage shall roll
Flames that surpass his lightnings, fiercer bolts
That quash his thunders, and from Neptune's hand
Dash his trined mace that from the bottom stirs
The troubled sea, and shakes the solid earth.
Crushed with this dreadful ruin shall he learn
How different to command and to obey.

When Chorus, shocked and apprehensive, asks him if he does not fear to vaunt this bold discourse, and reminds him that it is wisdom to respect the stern power of the god's vengeance, Prometheus contemptuously exclaims:

Go, then, with prompt servility fall down
Before your lord; fawn, cringe, and sue for grace.
For me, I value him at less than nothing.
Let him exert his brief authority,
And lord it whilst he may; his power in heaven
Shall vanish soon, nor leave a trace behind.

The same defiant tone he maintains when Mercury "th' obsequious lackey of this new-made monarch," arrives as messenger from heaven.

MERCURY: To thee grown old in craft, deep drenched in gall,
Disgustful to the gods, too prodigal
Of interdicted gifts to mortal man,
Thief of the fire of heaven, to thee my message.
My father bids thee say what nuptials these
Thy tongue thus vaunts as threat'ning his high power.
And clearly say, couched in no riddling phrase
Each several circumstance. Propound not to us
Ambiguous terms, Prometheus; for thou seest
Zeus brooks not such, unfit to win his favour.

PROMETHEUS: Thou dost thy message proudly, in high terms,
Becoming well the servant of such lords.
Your youthful power is new; yet vainly deem ye
Your high-raised towers impregnable to pain:
Have I not seen two sovereigns of the sky
Sink from their glorious state? And I shall see
A third, this present lord, with sudden ruin
Dishonourably fall. What! seem I now
To dread, to tremble at these new-raised gods?
That never shall their force extort from me.
Hence then! The way thou cam'st return with speed:
Thy vain inquiries get no other answer.

MERCURY: Such insolence before, so fiery fierce
Drew on thy head this dreadful punishment.

PROMETHEUS: My miseries, be assured, I would not change
For thy gay servitude, but rather choose
To live a vassal to this dreary rock,
Than lackey the proud heels of Zeus . . .

MERCURY: Were it well with thee, who could brook thy pride!

PROMETHEUS: Ah, me!

MERCURY: That sound of grief Zeus doth not know.

PROMETHEUS: Time, as its age advanceth, teacheth all things.

MERCURY: All its advances have not taught thee wisdom.

PROMETHEUS: I should not else waste words on thee, a vassal . . .

Not all his tortures, all his arts, shall move me
To unlock my lips till this cursed chain be loosed.
No, let him hurl his flaming lightnings, wing
His whitening snows, and with his thunders shake
The rocking earth, they move not me . . .

MERCURY: I see thou art implacable, unsoftened
. . . But mark me well.
If not obedient to my words, a storm,
A fiery and inevitable deluge
Shall burst in threefold vengeance on thy head.
First, his fierce thunder, winged with lightning flames,
Shall rend this rugged rock, and cover thee
With hideous ruin: long time shalt thou lie
Astonied in its rifted sides, till dragged
Again to light, then shall the bird of Zeus,
The ravening eagle, lured with scent of blood,
Mangle thy body, and each day returning,
An uninvited guest, plunge his fell beak
And feast and riot on thy black'ning liver.
Expect no pause, no respite, till some god
Comes to relieve thy pains, willing to pass
The dreary realms of ever-enduring night,
The dark descent of Tartarus profound.
Weigh these things well; this is no fiction drest
In vaunting terms, but words of serious truth.
The mouth of Zeus knows not to utter falsehood,
But what he speaks is fate. Be cautious then.
Regard thyself; let not o'erweening pride
Despise the friendly voice of prudent counsel.

CHORUS: Nothing amiss we deem his words, but fraught
With reason, who but wills thee to relax
Thy haughty spirit, and by prudent counsels

Pursue thy peace: be then advised. What shame
For one so wise to persevere in error!

PROMETHEUS: All this I knew ere he declared his message.

That enemy from enemy should suffer
Extreme indignity is nothing strange.
Let him then work his horrible pleasure on me;
Wreathe his black curling flames, tempest the air
With volleyed thunders and wild warring winds;
Rend from its roots the firm earth's solid base;
Heave from the roaring main its boisterous waves
And dash them to the stars; me, let him hurl,
Caught in the fiery tempest, to the gloom
Of deepest Tartarus; not all his power
Can quench th' ethereal breath of life in me.

Finally, Mercury bids the ocean-nymphs leave Prometheus to his fate lest their gentle hearts be struck with horror. They indignantly refuse to be guilty of such baseness, and the god departs, warning them not to blame Zeus for what might befall should they disregard him. The play then ends with Prometheus adding his own warning in order to save the nymphs, though himself sternly firm as ever.

PROMETHEUS: He fables not. I feel in very deed
The firm earth rock; the thunder's deep'ning roar
Rolls with redoubled rage; the bickering flames
Flash thick; the eddying sands are whirled on high;
In dreadful opposition the wild winds
Rend the vexed air; the boisterous billows rise
Confounding sea and sky; th' impetuous storm
Rolls all its frightful fury on my head.
Seest thou this, awful Themis? And thou, Æther,
Through whose pure azure floats the general stream
Of liquid light, see you what wrongs I suffer!

LODOVICO ARIOSTO

Orlando Furioso

I.—The Madness of Orlando

Of dames and knights and love and war I sing,
Of courtesies, and many a daring feat
Done in the days when that great Moorish king,
Fierce Agramant, set sail with all his fleet,
And ravaged France, and swore that he would bring
Discomfort and disaster and defeat
Upon the head of good King Charlemagne,
Who had encamped upon the hills of Spain.

Lodovico Ariosto was born on September 8, 1474, at Reggio, in Lombardy. He was, as Byron remarked, the Walter Scott of Italy—the poet of an age of splendid and stately manners, fierce passions and romantic sentiments. He lived at the brilliant court of the Dukes of Ferrara, in the great days of the Italian Renaissance. The genius of his race was then expressing itself in pictorial art, and he, too, was a painter in his way. He paints the glowing pageantry of Italian court life—its gorgeous setting, its glittering tourneys, its magnificent festivals, its scenes of picturesque gallantries. In his masterpiece, "Orlando Furioso," little of his own experience is reflected. At the age of twenty-eight he was made captain of the historic citadel of Canossa; he fought on the battlefield; he was sent on embassies; for many years he was secretary to Cardinal Hippolito d' Este; he governed a province for the Duke of Ferrara, and governed it very well. But all this activity seems foreign to the author of "Orlando Furioso." In this work he is seen only as the delighted spectator of the pageantry of his age. It is the spectacular side of the splendid life of his time which attracts him. The invective against women in the first part and the "Voyage to the Moon," which will be found in the following pages, are admirable pieces of irony. There was something of Byron as well as of Scott about Ariosto—the Byron that wrote "Don Juan." Ariosto died on June 6, 1533.

Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme
Of that great lord, Orlando, will I tell;
The bravest paladin of that brave time,
On whom a strange and furious madness fell
When back he travelled from the eastern clime,
Bringing a lady whom he loved full well:
Angelica, a princess of Cathay,
Whose face was fairer than the dawn of day.

Long had he wandered with the lovely dame
Through India, Persia, and the Orient land,
Establishing her glory and her fame
By high achievements done at her command.
Now to the Western world with her he came,
Resolved to serve her with his heart and hand:
And fight for her, and for his sovereign lord,
King Charlemagne, against the Moorish horde.

For Agramant had sailed with all the flower
Of Moorish chivalry, to ravage France;
And Charlemagne was gathering the power
Of Christendom to stay his fierce advance.
And so Orlando came, in evil hour
Unto the Pyrenees, with sword and lance.
And of his coming quickly he repented;
For something soon befel which he lamented.

For there he lost his sweet and lovely prize,
Angelica, the princess of Cathay.
Fearing the mischief kindled by her eyes,
King Charlemagne now carried her away,
Lest quarrelling and hatred should arise
Among his knights about so fair a may;
For well he knew Rinaldo, too, adored
Orlando's dame, and many another lord.
Indeed, Rinaldo had begun to fight

With his old friend Orlando for the dame,
When Charlemagne, to set the quarrel right,
Made both the paladins forego their claim.
And seeing they were full of hate and spite,
Both wild and passionate, and both to blame,
He suffered neither of the two to have her,
And unto Namus he in keeping gave her;

And vowed that he would give her to the man
Who, in the conflict on the battle-day,
Was foremost of the fighters in the van,
And slew most Moorish soldiers in the fray.
But counter to his hopes the battle ran,
And all his squadrons fled in disarray;
Namus with other Christian knights was taken,
And his pavilion in the rout forsaken.

And here Angelica awhile had stayed,
Waiting to be the valiant victor's meed.
But when the ranks were broken, the bright maid
Sprang from the tent and mounted on her steed,
And down a lonely woodland track she strayed,
Seeking a knight to help her in her need,
But only found a young and handsome Moor
Lying upon the ground, and bleeding sore.

When fair Angelica the stripling spies,
Nigh hurt to death in that disastrous fray,
Who for his King, that dead beside him lies,
Laments, while his own life-blood ebbs away,
She feels new pity in her bosom rise,
Which enters in a strange, unwonted way.
Thus did a common, wounded soldier win
A lady loved by many a paladin.

She staunched his wounds, and bathed his aching head,
And let him sleep awhile upon her breast;

And then she led him to a shepherd's shed,
And there again his wounds with art she dressed,
And sat and watched all night beside his bed;
And for a week she never went to rest.
And when from all his hurts he did recover,
She boldly begged him to become her lover.

Oh, Count Orlando! Oh, King Sacrapant!
Rinaldo and a hundred more beside!
What profits now the valour that you vaunt?
What profits all your prowess or your pride?
Never a single favour did she grant,
Though long you served her, and though long you sighed.
And she, whom all of you have wooed in vain,
Now gives herself unto a common swain.

And over her to give him perfect power,
With sacred rites a marriage was ordained.
Thus, with the veil of this most holy order
She covered up her folly and disorder.
The handsome lad was with her night and day,
Whether she took the air or kept the shed.
Together down the meadows would they stray,
Or wander by some flowery river-bed.

And on the rock of every pleasant cave,
And on the bark of every sheltering tree,
Their names together they would then engrave,
Twined in a lover's garland lovingly.
Such joy in one another did they have
They set it down for all the world to see.
Until there scarcely was a tree but bore
The name *Angelica:* the name *Medore.*

A month they passed in this delightful way,
And then Angelica, who now designed
To make Medore the Emperor of Cathay,
Led him across the western world to Ind.

And well it was they made no longer stay
In the wild woodland where their names were twined:
For suddenly Orlando, in great wrath,
Came riding down the lonely forest path.

Leaving his lord and kinsman, Charlemagne,
The paladin had roamed from land to land,
Seeking to find Angelica again,
By whose strange absence he was all unmanned.
Fiercely he rode across the hills of Spain,
And entered the wild woodland, sword in hand;
And there, half-blind with rage, on rocks and trees,
Two names—*Angelica-Medore*—he sees.

Down from his horse Orlando slowly got,
A dark suspicion working in his head;
And by sad chance he came upon the grot
Where the two lovers oft had made their bed;
And there all other things he clean forgot
As, in great bitterness of soul, he read
Upon the cave some verse Medore had writ
Touching the pleasure he had known in it.

"Ye pleasant plants, green herbs, and mossy bower,
Where fragrance and cool shadows ever reign,
Here, fair Angelica, that Orient flower,
On whom full many hearts were fixed in vain,
Has oft repaired with me in shine and shower,
And long within my loving arms has lain;
For these great pleasures found upon your banks
I, poor Medore, can yield but praise and thanks!"

Drawing his faulchion, mad Orlando clave
Clean through the rock and writing of Medore.
He choked with splintered stone the lovers' cave,
Its flowers he trampled down, its trees he tore.

So even sheep or shepherd should not have
Joy in its shade and shelter any more.
Then down upon the earth he fell, and cried
On woman's falseness, cruelty and pride.

"Oh, womankind!" he said, "how lightly move
Your fickle fancy and your wild desire!
You are not steadfast like the stars above,
But flitting like the marsh-light on the mire.
Nor knightly service, nor true-hearted love
Has power to fix your false and wandering fire.
That man is mad that thinks of trusting you,
For womankind is crafty and untrue.

"An angry God sent forth your wicked sex,
Like some great plague, upon the pleasant earth,
To darken all the light of heaven, and vex
Mankind that else had lived in happy mirth.
For all our peace of mind you now perplex,
And empty life of everything of worth.
Oh, greatly must mankind have sinned, for God
To scourge us with so terrible a rod!

"Why did not kindly Nature so provide,
Without your help, that man from man should come
And one be grafted on the other's side,
As is the apple with the pear and plum?
But Nature can no rule or plan abide,
She ever must exceed in all or some:
The reason is not difficult to render,
For Nature is herself of female gender.

"But be not therefore proud and full of scorn,
Oh, womankind! that men come from your seed.
Sweet roses blossom on the prickly thorn;
The fragrant lily springs from loathsome weed;

From muddy soil there grows the goodly corn;
And basest mould the fairest flowers breed.
But ye are false, and wicked and perverse,
Created for the world's eternal curse!"

Three days upon the ground Orlando lay
With wild and staring eyes, like one gone blind.
He neither slept nor stirred, but swooned away
In agony and misery of mind.
Then, as his overburdened wits gave way,
His arms moved like a windmill in the wind;
His teeth he gnashed, his hair he madly tore,
And cast away the armour that he wore.

There was his helmet, there his cuirass thrown:
His shield far off: and, further than the rest,
His faulchion: all along the wood was strown
His glittering gear: and even his torn vest.
For he was now stripped naked to the bone,
Showing his shaggy paunch and back and breast.
So strong he was that, had he kept his blade,
Wild havoc in the world he would have made.

II.—The Voyage to the Moon

Of all the paladins of Charlemagne
The English knight, Astolfo, was the best.
And he adventured life and soul to gain
The flying horse a sorcerer possessed;
And entering the sorcerer's domain
The powers of wizardry did he arrest;
And springing then upon the flying horse,
Up to the moon he boldly winged his course.

Long would it take to tell the wondrous tale
Of all the lunar marvels he explored,

As over wooded hill and winding dale,
In admiration and amaze he soared.
He landed in a strange, enchanted vale,
In which, in massed confusion, there were stored
The numberless and varied things of worth,
Which men by chance and folly lose on earth.

The precious time we idly waste away,
Our high designs that never take effect,
Our good intentions and the long array
Of opportunities that we neglect;
Our hopes that fade, our virtues that decay,
The counsel and the friendship we reject—
Yes! Everything is there which we misuse,
Save folly. That, alas! we never lose.

And passing by his own lost days and deeds,
His early ardours, joys, and innocence,
Which now were overgrown and hid in weeds,
Astolfo found, upon an eminence,
Great store of that which no man thinks he needs,
Though each man needs it badly—commonsense—
Of which so much has mounted to the moon,
That earth will quite be emptied of it soon.

It is a subtle essence, and it flies
From angry heads in swift evaporation;
And as it goes up, steaming to the skies,
The moon-men, by a kind of condensation,
Store it in stoneware jars of every size.
And on the largest, in large letters writ,
Astolfo saw: "*This is Orlando's Wit.*"

On every jar in which lost wits were stored,
The loser's name was clearly written down.
His own Astolfo spied, and much deplored
That he had lost more wit than any clown.

But when he saw the names of many a lord,
And many a prince and poet of renown,
Who think they have great store of wit, and boast it,
He laughed, for it was plain they all had lost it.

Some lose their wits with love, some with ambition,
Some running after wealth they never get,
Some following lords and men of high condition,
And some with avarice are overset;
Some wish to be a subtle politician,
And some with poetry their wits forget.
So commonsense and wisdom now decay,
And all the world grows madder day by day.

The jar in which Orlando's wits were placed
Astolfo put upon his flying horse.
Across the moon he flew in furious haste,
And downward to the earth he winged his course,
Landing upon a wide and barren waste,
Where all the paladins had come in force,
To try and cure Orlando of that madness
Which filled all Christendom with grief and sadness.

And as Astolfo and his fellow peers
In counsel and discourse were occupied,
A wild alarm rang out; they seized their spears,
And forth into the camp they quickly hied.
And there, among their bravest cavaliers,
A fierce and naked savage they descried.
Alone he was, but yet so strong of hand
That he was routing all the Christian band.

Above his head he whirled a sapling oak,
And every time he struck with all his force
And sent some soldier reeling from the stroke,
Or knocked some captain headlong from his horse.

Beneath his blows the band of warriors broke,
And left behind them many a stricken corse;
Disheartened, beaten, and dismayed, they ran
Before that single naked savage man.

And all the paladins, when they beheld him,
And saw how fierce and furiously he ranged,
Prepared to ride him down; but ere they felled him,
The wise Astolfo their rash purpose changed.
For well he knew the man who now repelled him—
So wild he seemed, and woefully estranged—
It was Orlando, furious and raving,
Whom good Astolfo was resolved on saving.

"It is Orlando! Slay him not!" he cried,
Turning his horse, and beating down the spears.
The paladins their poor mad comrade eyed,
And few of them could stay their falling tears.
For he had been their glory and their pride,
The bravest and the greatest of the peers
Who fought for Christendom and Charlemagne
Against the pagan Saracens of Spain.

So grieve and so lament the greater part
Of these good warriors that their eyes are wet.
"'Tis time," Astolfo says, "to find some art
To cure him of the madness all regret."
And from his horse he springs, and Brandimart,
And Dudon, Oliver and Sansonet
Leap to the ground, and all together make
At mad Oralndo, whom they mean to take.

Behind him Dudon springs, and tries to trip him,
While Brandimart about his shoulders hangs;
Astolfo and the others hold and clip him,
Although he shakes them till their armour clangs.

He who has seen a bull when mastiffs grip him,
And fasten in his flesh their cruel fangs,
How still he runs and roars and strains and rears,
With all the mastiffs hanging on his ears;

He can imagine how Orlando now
Strives with the paladins upon the plain.
He smites down Oliver with one fierce blow,
But quick the good knight comes at him again,
Then stops. For suddenly he finds out how
To capture him with little hurt or pain,
So, while the others struggle, he prepares
To take Orlando prisoner unawares.

Strong ropes and cords he bids the soldiers bring,
And running nooses in the ropes he ties;
These on Orlando's arms and legs they fling
And tangle both his feet before he flies.
Then, having got him roped within a ring,
They drag him down and will not let him rise.
Thus is Orlando thrown at last perforce,
As farriers throw a furious, savage horse.

They fall on him and keep him on the ground,
And bind him hard and fast, both hand and foot;
And when Orlando feels that he is bound,
Madder he grows, and writhes till the ropes cut.
Astolfo, then, who means to make him sound,
And sees his naked body black as soot,
Takes him upon his shoulder to the shore,
And washes him, and makes him white once more.

And while the madman slumbers in a swoon;
Astolfo takes the cork from out a jar—
Recovered from the valley of the moon—
In which the wits of poor Orlando are.

And places it beneath his nose; and soon,
With eyes as clear and radiant as a star,
Orlando wakes, as wise as any man
Awakened since the race of men began.

As one who, in some wild and fearful vision,
Has dreamed of all the spectres of the night,
Is troubled, when he wakes, with superstition,
And fears awhile to look upon the light;
Thinking it is another apparition
That soon will turn to terror and affright.
So now Orlando lies and looks around,
And wonders why he has been stripped and bound.

He holds his peace; but lifting up his eyes,
He sees his friends, the good King Brandimart,
And Oliver, and him that made him wise;
And knows them all, and loves them from his heart.
He does not speak, he does not try to rise,
But wonders why he plays so mad a part.
He sees that he is naked, and he feels
Strong ropes and cords about his arms and heels.

At last he cried, as old Silenus cried
To those who took him napping in a cave:
"Unloosen me!" The ropes were then untied,
And as Orlando did no longer rave,
Clothes, arms, and armour and a horse to ride,
To him his friends in gladsome friendship gave;
And made a feast to drive away the sadness
That filled him at thought of all his madness.

Thus was Orlando, the great champion, made
A wiser man than he had been of yore.
War and adventure only were his trade,
And love he never thought of any more.

But with lance couched, and gonfalon displayed,
He turned his champing warhorse from the shore;
Resolved that fame and glory to recover
Which he had lost while he had been a lover.

King Agramant beneath his sword was slain
In a wild battle by Biserta town;
And great Gradasso, King of Sericane,
And many a Moorish chief he there struck down.
Thus, fighting for his kinsman Charlemagne,
Orlando won high honour and renown.
And back to Paris, triumphing he came,
With all the city ringing with his name.

ARISTOPHANES

The Birds

Persons in the Drama

PEISTHETAIRUS *and* EUELPIDES, *Athenian citizens*
TROCHILUS THE WAGTAIL
THE HOOPOE
THE NIGHTINGALE
IRIS, *messenger of the gods*
POSEIDON, HERCULES, TRIBALLUS, *deputation from the gods*
PROMETHEUS
A POET, A COMMISSIONER, A SOOTHSAYER, A HAWKER, A GEOMETRICIAN, *etc.*

CHORUS OF BIRDS

ACT I

PEISTHETAIRUS and Euelpides—or as Bunyan might have called them, Mr. Persuasive and Mr. Sanguine—leave Athens because the entire population is absorbed in attending the law courts all the year round;

> To seek some easier unlitigious place,
> Meaning to settle there and colonise.

With a raven and a jackdaw to guide them, they go in search of the mythical king, Tereus (who had been

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Aristophanes, the greatest of the ancient comic writers, was born at Athens about 448 B.C., and died about 388 B.C. The Athens of the Peloponnesian War is accordingly the scene of his comedies. This play was produced in 414 B.C. The three plays, "The Knights," "The Clouds," and "The Frogs," are representative of Aristophanes' attitude towards one or other of the three special objects of his satire (see *post*). But "The Birds"

turned into a hoopoe), the husband of Procne, who had been turned into a nightingale. The birds have brought the travellers to a pathless spot, where there is nothing but rocks and brushwood. Here they both signify that something is to be expected from above.

This, then, must be the travellers' destination; they begin to shout: "Whoo-hoop! Hoop-oe!" and are startled out of their wits by a door opening, and the appearance of Trochilus the Wagtail, with a portentous beak, who challenges them as being men and bird-catchers. Both declare that they are really birds, and want speech of the Hoopoe, whose servant the Wagtail is. He goes to call the Hoopoe, who appears, with terrifying beak and crest. Euelpides, the subordinate of the two Athenians, does the talking, till the dignified Peisthetairus assumes the tone of authority.

Euelpides explains that they have come to the Hoopoe for advice—

> Because you were a man, the same as us,
> And found yourself in debt, the same as us,
> And did not like to pay, the same as us,
> And after that you changed into a bird,
> And ever since have flown and wandered far
> Over the lands and seas, and have acquired
> All knowledge that a bird or man can learn.

In fact, they want a nice cheerful hospitable place with no law courts. None of the human habitations suggested by Hoopoe is at all up to the mark. How do the birds get on? "Pretty well; no money worries, and plenty to feast on." Now Peisthetairus breaks in:

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is aimed at no individual; it is simply a piece of delightful topsy-turvydom, with very little in the way of personal allusion, and wholly free from rancour. It contains lyric passages which have led some critics to lament that a lyrical genius should have been tempted down from his true sphere to the writing of mere comedies. It is to be regretted that no translation can give an adequate idea of the poet's powers in this field. But the piece displays Aristophanes as a master unsurpassed in the art of writing irresistible nonsense.

How grand a scheme among the race of birds
I see—what power, if you'd be ruled by me!
Set up a city.
What? a city of birds?

Punning on the Greek terms for sky and city, Peisthetairus explains that by occupying the sky, their city, they can make the gods obey them by intercepting the sacrificial offerings on the way to heaven. The Hoopoe is delighted, and goes off to waken the Nightingale.

He sings outside; the Nightingale's warble is heard; then the Hoopoe gives the call-song of the birds—piping and twittering, fluttering, trilling, chirruping, warbling. The Chorus of four-and-twenty different birds flock on to the stage, to the astonished comments of the human visitors, while Hoopoe explains who they are. The birds assume hostile attitudes and Euelpides is very much frightened. The birds clamour against the Hoopoe for having betrayed them, and propose immediately to peck the intruders to death. The resourceful Peisthetairus, however, is quick to arm himself and Euelpides with the kitchen pots and pans, while Hoopoe stoutly strives to quell the excitement. These are friends of his who have come with the most excellent intentions and superlatively sensible proposals. Besides, even if they come of a hostile race, what better than to learn wisdom from your enemies? The Chorus quieten down. They will hear what the Hoopoe has to say.

Hoopoe explains that the strangers wish to settle among them, and are most intelligent and convincing. He invites the Athenians to hang their coats of mail in the chimney-corner again, and set forth their plans. Peisthetairus insists on a formal armistice. When the birds have duly sworn, he delivers an oration. The birds are the sovereigns of creation—were so, in fact, before there were gods or earth, as witness Æsop's fables, with other demonstrations. The Cock was lord of Persia before Darius was heard of; the Kite was king of the

Hellenes—that is why they grovel when they see one; the Cuckoo ruled in Egypt. Zeus himself has an Eagle for his emblem (all of these statements are punctuated by a burlesque commentary from Euelpides); Apollo has the hawk, and Athene the Owl. That was in order that these birds might claim their proper share in the sacrifices. But now, how are the birds fallen from their high estate! With men and boys "snaring them, scaring them, hooting them, shooting them, toasting them, roasting them." The Chorus weep over the pathetic picture of their degradation, and petition the orator to tell them how they may recover their ancient glories.

Peisthetairus unfolds the plan. They are to fortify an aerial Babylon. That done, they will send an ultimatum to Olympus demanding the abdication of Zeus on pain of exclusion from space between earth and heaven; and another to men, requiring every sacrifice to the gods to be accompanied by an oblation to the appropriate birds, on pain of having their grain devoured and the eyes pecked out of their cattle and sheep. The birds can be a lot more use to them than the gods, if they are amenable, and will not be half so expensive to worship. The delighted birds unanimously elect Peisthetairus their president.

The Hoopoe now promises to provide the visitors with wings, and to introduce Procne the Nightingale. The Chorus hail her with a song, and she leads the choric strain, the other actors quitting the stage.

> Ye children of Man! whose life is a span,
> Protracted with sorrow from day to day,
> Naked and featherless, feeble and querulous,
> Sickly calamitous creatures of clay!
> Attend to the words of the Sovereign Birds.

Since mankind have of late been troubling themselves with "profound speculation about the Creation," let them hear the true origin of things.

> Before the Creation of Aether and Light,
> Chaos and Night together were plight.

An Egg was the result, out of which Love was hatched; the Primitive Birds were the first-born of Love and Chaos; the gods, the earth, and all other creatures coming later. Men owe all to the birds, from whom they learn the time for sowing, and shearing, and everything. The chorus then emphasise the freedom of the bird-laws, and the immense convenience that will result from being endowed with wings.

Act II

The former characters reappear, Peisthetairus and Euelpides duly feathered, and much pleased with themselves, though each is hugely amused at the other's appearance. But now arises the important question: What is the new state to be called? Cloud-cuckoo-land! Nephelococcugia! "A truly noble and sonorous name." Peisthetairus then persuades Euelpides to go away and attend to the building, while he himself remains to attend to the ceremonial sacrifices. They are going to have a Real Sacrifice on the stage; something awe-inspiring—a sheep! But Peisthetairus draws the line at the Crow for the solo singer. He and the priest proceed to invoke bird after bird; but Peisthetairus again pulls up at the Cormorant and Vulture when the sacrifice is not big enough to satisfy a single Kite; and the priest finds he must content himself with just one or two bird-deities.

But now begins a series of interruptions; the news of Nephelococcugia has reached earth, and visitors arrive. The first is a Poet with an ode:

> Nephelococcugia!
> Hymn, O Muse, the happy day!
> Chanting a melodious lay!
> The Muse's menial I, as Homer hath it.

Pleisthetairus packs him off with a vest from one of the company and a coat from another. The next arrival

is a Soothsayer, with an oracle which says that he is to receive a rich reward. Peisthetairus extemporises another oracle, which says that he is to be soundly flogged, and the soothsayer retreats hastily. Next comes Meton the geometrician, very self-important, to make a survey of the new city. He is frightened off by an alarm of an outbreak of popular violence against aliens. He is succeeded by a Commissioner from Athens, also very self-important. Peisthetairus drubs him out, as a street-hawker enters droning an Athenian proclamation for the benefit of the Nephelococcugians; and he has some trouble in getting rid of the pair. Consequently, he retires to finish the ceremonial indoors without further interruption. The Chorus proceed to set a price on the head of the fowler Philocrates, and to promise the judges who are to award the prize for comedy their favour if the play wins, and sundry pains and penalties if it does not.

With the re-entry of the actors a breathless messenger arrives to tell Governor Peisthetairus that the fortifications are already completed; rather to the governor's annoyance the messenger narrates the various parts played by the cranes, storks, sea-birds, geese, pelicans, and other birds. Peisthetairus is somewhat incredulous, but his attention is promptly absorbed by another messenger. "One of the gods has evaded the guards, and is flying through the birds' realm of air; we don't know who it was, but squadrons of hawks, eagles, and the like have been dispatched in pursuit." Amid wild excitement, Iris, the messenger of Zeus, is sighted and promptly arrested, to her great indignation. Peisthetairus deals with her with dignified firmness; and impresses upon her that the Olympians are of no account at all; the birds are the masters of the situation. Her threat to "tell her father" is given an unexpected interpretation; and the Olympians are given public notice that trespassers will be prosecuted.

A Herald from earth now arrives, with numerous

high-flown compliments, to say that the birds have become so extremely popular that crowds of human beings must be expected to arrive, demanding to be naturalised in the new community, and to be provided with wings. The Chorus chant the praise of Nephelococcugia, while Peisthetairus is upset by the delay in fetching an assortment of wings.

The first of the would-be colonists to arrive is Patraloias, a young man, who is enamoured of the idea of flying, and hankers to be a citizen where he may thrash his father with impunity. Peisthetairus remarks that he will not like the law which requires sons to maintain their parents; and recommends him to satisfy his pugnacity by taking service with the army in Thrace. The youth accepts the suggestion. Then comes Cinesias, a dithyrambic poet, who thinks he will acquire good "copy" by flying about among the clouds. In theory, he desires to be "buffeted and baffled with the gusty gales," but does not like being taken at his word. The next character is a "sycophant," who wishes to make his livelihood as an informer and blackmailer. Peisthetairus draws him out artistically, and, having fooled him to the top of his bent, produces a horsewhip, which has the desired effect.

After a brief choric song with topical allusions, the Titan Prometheus enters with stealthy tread, enveloped in a cloak. He would impart to Peisthetairus a dread secret, but no Olympian eye must mark his act. "Prometheus!" Hush! Hush! An umbrella to conceal us! Now; Zeus is ruined! The fact is, the gods are being fairly starved out, because the smoke of the sacrifices can't get to them. The Olympians and the barbarian gods, the Triballi, are going to send an embassy; and as Prometheus is not exactly fond of the Olympians he has come to warn Peisthetairus to make no concession, but insist on the recognition of the birds' sovereignty, and claim the Lady Queen who manages Zeus's household

for his own bride. Peisthetairus bids Prometheus a polite farewell.

The Chorus introduce one of the favourite jibes about Socrates, that he was not given to bathing; and then the deputation from the gods enter—Poseidon, with Hercules, and the barbarian Triballus, an unintelligible savage. Poseidon represents the diplomatic proprieties; Hercules is a beefy, thick-headed glutton. Peisthetairus ignores them at first; he is intent on sauces. But when Hercules thrusts forward, he greets him blandly. The hero explains that they have come to treat for peace. Peisthetairus has no objection. If the envoys are prepared to acknowledge the ancient sovereignty of the birds, he will be delighted to see them at supper. Hercules agrees at once, but Poseidon protests. Peisthetairus points out the immense advantage to the gods of leaving the birds to look after things for them on earth; punishing perjury, for instance, or securing the fulfilment of vows. Hercules applies moral suasion to Triballus, who agrees; and Poseidon gives in. Peisthetairus at once adds the trivial demand for the Lady Queen. Poseidon declares that this ends the negotiation; not so Hercules, on whom Peisthetairus surreptitiously urges the futility of his hoping to inherit anything from his father Zeus, since he is illegitimate and Athene is not. Hercules and Triballus are one too many for Poseidon, who has to submit. Hercules stops behind to keep an eye on the cooking, while his uncle departs to get the treaty carried out. The Chorus now has a hit at the Athenian love of forensic rhetoric, and at the travelling teachers of that art in the person of Gorgias; and the play closes with the entry of Peisthetairus and his bride, to the strains of a Hymeneal ode.

The Frogs

Persons in the Drama

BACCHUS	CHARON	ÆACUS
XANTHIAS, *his slave*	PLUTO	EURIPIDES
HERCULES	ÆSCHYLUS	CORPSE
HOSTESSES	FROG CHORUS	
SERVING-WENCH	CHORUS OF INITIATES	

ACT I

BACCHUS is discovered—with the lion's skin and club, which are the attributes of Hercules—along with his slave Xanthias, who is seated on a donkey, but carries his master's belongings over his shoulder, before the abode of Hercules.

Bacchus means to simplify his task by personating that hero, who once paid a visit to the nether regions. He has come to call on Hercules for directions. After a colloquy with the slave for the benefit of the "gallery," he hammers at the door. Hercules cannot contain his laughter at the figure in the lion's skin. But Bacchus means to be taken seriously. He explains his purpose. He wants to get Euripides back, becaues there is no one left who can say such fine startling things in the way

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The satirical comedy of "The Frogs" was written primarily in connection with the recent death of Euripides, who was always a favourite object of attack with Aristophanes. Bacchus, the effeminate wine-god, who is also the patron of the drama, which originated in the festivals to his honour, is so distressed at the decadence of the tragic stage since both Sophocles and Euripides have departed this life, that he resolves to visit Hades, the abode of the dead, and try to procure the release of his favourite, Euripides. The plot of the piece is concerned with his adventures, culminating in the literary tournament between Æschylus (see p. 16), and Euripides (see p. 336), in which the god, sitting as judge, finds himself obliged to award the supremacy to Æschylus.

of moral paradoxes. So he wishes to be told all about the roads and inns, and the proper people to call on in Hades—and, to begin with, the shortest way there. Hercules suggests hanging, or hemlock, or tumbling off a tower.

None of these appeal to Bacchus, who wishes to know the route Hercules took himself. Hercules tells him that you come to a Bottomless Lake; you pay twopence to be ferried over; then you come to a region of the most terrifying monsters; and a disgusting slough where the worst evil-doers wallow—parricides, perjurers, plagiarists, and the like. Then comes the paradise of the Initiated, "and they'll tell you all about it, so good-bye."

A funeral procession passes; Xanthias hails the corpse to carry the luggage, for which he offers a tip; the corpse demands more and refuses to split the difference. So Xanthias has to go on. Arriving at the Styx, they hail Charon, who is calling "All aboard for Tartarus, Cerberus, and Lethe! All aboard for Tænarus and Blazes!"

They are rowed over, to the accompaniment of the Frog-song:

Brekekekex ko-ax ko-ax, Brekekekex ko-ax ko-ax!
Marshy children of the Spring,
Let us sing,
Raise our most melodious strain,
Sweet, sweet refrain,
Ko-ax ko-ax ko-ax.
We
Of the Muses chosen be
Brekekekex ko-ax ko-ax.
On sunny days we leap and sing
(Where march-plants grow)
Our diving song like anything;
If it rains we plunge below,
Down we go,
Tuneful melodies redoubling,
Bubble, bubble, bubbling.
Brekekekex ko-ax ko-ax.

Neither the rowing nor the music are to the god's taste. On landing he hands Charon his twopence. In-

specting the country, he discovers among the audience, by the help of Xanthias, the perjurers, parricides, etc., as described by Hercules. He begins to talk big about the monsters; till Xanthias frightens him by seeing and hearing loathly worms, phantom hounds, and other horrors, but presently comforts him with the news that they have all gone. At this point the Chorus—of devotees of the god himself—enter, chanting his praises, while Bacchus rigidly maintains his incognito. They warn off as "profane" all "traitors to the state and the stage"; this is followed up by topical allusions and personal lampoons; and the scene changes to the gates of Pluto's palace.

Act II

Bacchus is very anxious about the correct way of knocking; but, encouraged by Xanthias, he assumes what Bottom calls "Ercles' vein":

> What ho! 'Tis I! the mighty Hercules!

Æacus, as porter, opens the door, and rails upon the supposed Hercules—for having stolen the watch-dog Cerberus—in approved melodramatic style. Bacchus collapses in abject terror, which he tries to make light of when Æacus has retired; but he offers to exchange rôles with Xanthias, a proposal which the slave promptly accepts. He dons the lion's skin; but it is now a serving-wench who appears, and invites him—as Hercules—to step in and enjoy himself. Whereupon Bacchus insists on resuming his own part and not carrying the little joke any further.

The Chorus applaud the dexterous versatility. But Bacchus-Hercules is now assailed by two dames, who keep eating-houses, with charges of Herculean gluttony. Nineteen loaves, and a score of chops, fish, pickles, cheese, he had swallowed, frightened them into fits when they demanded payment, and now they'll have the law of

him. They'll get Cleon and Hyperbolus—dead demagogues—to take up their cause. As they go out, Bacchus hints that perhaps Xanthias had better stick to the rôle of Hercules after all, and he will promise not to change again. Xanthias, nothing loth, assumes the lion's hide and truculent air of Hercules, while Bacchus picks up the luggage.

Æacus enters with myrmidons of the law and bids them seize Xanthias. "Someone will have a bad time now," says Bacchus; but Xanthias acts up to his part and disperses the assailants. Æacus is disgusted, but Xanthias generously offers to let them put his slave to the torture, and see if they can prove anything against him: suggesting a series of ingenious methods of torment. But Bacchus protests; he is a god, and they had better be careful before they start beating him; the other fellow is only a slave. Xanthias proposes a test: let them both be beaten, and the one who doesn't flinch must be accounted the Immortal. They are struck in turn, but for each exclamation they utter they produce plausible explanations, till Æacus decides that there is no way of settling which is which but by taking them before Pluto and Persephone, who, being gods, will recognise the god. They go off, and the Chorus takes up a political strain.

After a jibe at the demagogue Cleophon, the singers recommend an amnesty for the supporters of the oligarchy which had held and lost a brief supremacy at Athens. Another demagogue, Cleigenes, then has his turn, and they go on to recommend the restitution of Alcibiades.

Now, the thought has often struck me that our conduct is the same
In the matter of our citizens who bear an honoured name
As in dealing with the coins of olden mintage, and the new.
These, which no alloy debases—none so pure and none so true,
None so perfect in the cutting, none at all that ring so sound,
Though you search the lands of Hellas and barbarian realms around—

These we never touch, but wretched brazen coins we choose,
'tis so,
That were minted—very vilely—scarce a day or two ago.
So whene'er we find a man of level head and noble birth,
Honourable, truthful, trained in sports and arts, of patent worth,
We insult him; but your red-haired alien knaves with brazen face,
Blackguards born of blackguard stock, we pitchfork into every place.
Come, e'en now you'd best reform, my foolish friends, and change your ways;
Use again the useful folk; if you succeed, 'twill be but just;
While if still you fail and come to grief, yet every wise man says—
Choose at least a gallows worth the hanging from, if hang you must.

Æacus and Xanthias now enter, on excellent and sympathetic terms. They are interrupted by a clamour, which Æacus explains. Æschylus has hitherto occupied the presidential chair as master-tragedian; now Euripides has arrived and has been working up a faction to have Æschylus turned out and himself put in. Æschylus has refused to submit to the arbitration of the empty-headed Athenians, so Bacchus has been appointed to sit in judgment. Now, says the Chorus, we shall hearken to sonorous Æschylean thunders majestically rumbling, and then to the subtle hair-splitting trickeries of Euripides.

Act III

The rivals enter, with Bacchus; Æschylus stalking in solemn silence with gathered brows; Euripides goading him with taunts, till he explodes with volcanic indignation. Bacchus endeavours to calm the storm. The Chorus invoke the Muses to inspire the efforts of the rivals in the approaching contest. After characteristic preliminary sacrifices, the disputation begins with an attack by Euripides on the portentous silences whereon he accuses Æschylus of relying for stage effects, and the Æschylean language, which is sound and fury, signify-

ing nothing; with this he contrasts his own naturalism, and his own eloquence with his rival's ruggedness.

Æschylus, incited by the Chorus to "open the floodgates of figure and phrase," charges Euripides with having set at nought the primary function of the poet, which is to elevate and purify his auditors. Æschylus had taught them heroic and martial ideals, for instance, in the "Seven against Thebes," and the "Persae," while under the instructions of Euripides the people had become base and degraded. Æschylus had followed the ancient mighty poets—Orpheus, Hesiod, Homer; Euripides had devoted himself to indecent sex-problems, whereby he had influenced all womenkind to their own demoralisation, and to sophistical dialects which were emasculating the other sex.

Next they turn to verbal criticisms—the tautologies of the one, the quibbles of the other—till Æschylus produces a burlesque sample of the Euripidean lyric monologue, mixing sham sublimity with catchpenny pathos. From this they come to weighing individual lines against each other, for which purpose a huge pair of scales is set on the stage. Each poet rolls out a line at a time, and each time the Æschylean line is the heavier. "Argo with her woven wings" is overwhelmed by "Spercheius' streams, and ye, herd-pasturing plains." A line about "persuasion" is outweighed by one about Death (as being the heaviest of calamities). Euripides tries to save himself with "He grasped a mighty mace of heavy weight," but is crushed by "Chariots on chariots, heaped pell-mell." Still, Bacchus is reluctant to deny the palm to either. Pluto encourages him with the promise that he shall take back to earth the one on whom his choice falls. So he fixes on a crucial test: Which can give the best advice about Athens and Alcibiades?

> EURIPIDES: I hate the man that in his country's service
> Is slow, but ready and quick to work her harm;
> Unserviceable except to serve himself.

ÆSCHYLUS: 'Tis rash and idle policy to foster
A lion's whelp within the city walls;
But when he's reared and grown, you must indulge him.
EURIPIDES: If we mistrust where present trust is placed,
Trusting in what was heretofore mistrusted—
ÆSCHYLUS: Their seamen and their fleet their only safeguard,
Their sole resource, hardship and poverty,
And resolute endurance in distress—

Bacchus decides after hesitation, in favour of Æschylus, to the pathetic distress of Euripides, who feels himself betrayed since Bacchus had promised him the award. The god answers him with a line of his own:

Only my tongue hath sworn; my heart is free.

The Chorus comment:

Mark the moral—that you should
Still be wise and still be good.
Thus the noble worthy Bard
Meets with a deserved reward;
But to quibble and to prate
In metaphysical debate
While the practice and the rules
Of the true poetic schools
Are renounced or slighted wholly
Is a madness and a folly.

Pluto gives Æschylus some parting messages, with special notices to sundry still-surviving demagogues to make haste and descend to the other world. Æschylus desires that in his absence the presidential chair may be occupied by Sophocles, but in no case be profaned by Euripides, and takes his departure to a choric farewell.

The Knights

Persons in the Drama

CLEON, *a tanner*
A SAUSAGE-SELLER
DEMOS, *the god of public opinion*
DEMOSTHENES
NICIAS
CHORUS OF KNIGHTS

ACT I

DEMOSTHENES *and* NICIAS *enter as slaves of* DEMOS. *They have just been whipped, and abuse* CLEON, *the "Paphlagonian," and burst out boo-hooing.* DEMOSTHENES stops.

Come, grief's no use; it's folly to keep crying.
Let's look about us a bit, what's best to be done.

Nicias suggests that they had better go and pray to the gods—he was notoriously a prey to superstition. Demosthenes states their unhappy case to the audience:

Three individuals at Athens were favourite subjects for his satire: Cleon, the typical demagogue and leader of the extreme war party in the contest with Sparta; Socrates, regarded as the typical sophist; and Euripides, the dramatist. In "The Knights" the satire is directed against Cleon, who had just won palpably undeserved laurels. The Athenian general, Demosthenes, had cooped up a Spartan force in the island of Sphacteria; Cleon had received the command, but had retained the services of Demosthenes, with the result that the Spartans had been forced to surrender, Cleon claiming the credit. Sparta was ready to make peace, but Cleon and his following were not. Aristophanes stood for the Conservative party, the strength of which lay among the "knights," the well-to-do middle class; accordingly the Chorus, the poet's own mouthpiece, is a band of knights, and the play takes its title from the Chorus.

Here are we,
A couple of servants—with a master at home
Next door to the hustings. He's a man in years,
A kind of bean-fed, husky, testy character;
Choleric and brutal at times, and partly deaf.
He's bought a slave out of a tanner's yard;
This fellow, the Paphlagonian, has found out
The blind side of our master's understanding
With fawning and wheedling. Then he slanders us,
And gets us beaten and lashed. So we must take
A fixed determination—now's the time—
Which way to turn ourselves and what to do.

Nicias suggests a dignified suicide by drinking bull's blood, like Themistocles. Demosthenes prefers a draught of wine, and sends Nicias to fetch it. Nicias does so, and reports that the Paphlagonian is asleep. Demosthenes, inspired by the wine, sends him off again to steal Cleon's oracles. Nicias again obeys. Demosthenes discovers that the oracle says the tanner is to be overthrown by a sausage-seller; and at this appropriate moment, a sausage-seller is sighted, and they hail him in.

DEMOSTHENES: O happy man! celestial sausage-seller!
Friend, guardian, and protector of us all!
Come forward, save your friends and save the country!
SAUSAGE-SELLER: Here, can't you let me wash the guts and tripe,
And sell my sausages in peace and quiet?

But now Cleon has awakened, and bursts on the stage, breathing blood and thunder. Demosthenes, however, calls to the knights for their aid; the Chorus canter in on hobby-horses, and prance round Cleon—

Close around and confound him, the confounder of us all.
Pelt him, pummel him, and maul him, rummage, ransack, overhaul him,
Overbear him and out-bawl him; bear him down and bring him under.
Bellow like a burst of thunder, robber! harpy! sink of plunder!
Rogue and villain! Rogue and cheat! Rogue and villain, I repeat!

The sausage-seller, frightened at first, takes courage and defies Cleon, and the pair have a scolding match,

the sausage-seller capping each extravagance of Cleon's. The Chorus applaud; they have got the man who will out-Cleon Cleon! The scolding match is renewed, and ends in a rough-and-tumble scrimmage in which the sausage-seller gets the best of it. He proceeds to describe his own transcendent abilities, the implication being, of course, that they are of the same order as Cleon's own.

Cleon vows that he will impeach the sausage-seller for his peculations, and the other is fertile in enumerating counter-charges to be brought against the tanner. Cleon goes off to enter his accusations before the senate. The chorus hurry the sausage-seller after him, fortified outwardly with grease, and inwardly with garlic.

The stage being clear, the chorus addresses the spectators. The author has resolved to devote himself to comedy, in spite of the scandalous way in which the fickle public throw over their most distinguished and popular dramatists. Then they call for aid upon Poseidon, the sea-god, most propitious of the deities to Athens. There follows a song in praise of the heroes of the past.

> Sing we the praise of our fathers to-day;
> Worthy the Land and the Mantle were they;
> Warriors battling afloat or ashore,
> Everywhere triumphing, still bringing more
> Fame for the city. When facing the foe,
> Never a man of them counted them—no!
> Valour was straightway in arms and afire.
> Did one in fighting fall flat in the mire?
> Brush off the mud, never own to the fall,
> Back to the grip! . . .

Then Athene is invoked, and the knights sing the praise of their steeds in a burlesque strain, at the close of which the sausage-seller reappears with a triumphant air.

He had found Cleon, he tells them, deluging the senate with a torrent of terrific language. Seizing a propitious moment, he had burst in upon them, shouting, "News, news! The biggest haul of pilchards on record!" Cleon at once proposed to celebrate the occasion by a pub-

lic sacrifice of a hundred oxen to the goddess. The sausage-seller moved for two hundred, and

> Proposed a vow
> For a thousand goats to be offered to Diana
> Whenever sprats should fall to forty a penny.

The rejoicing senate adjourned to secure pilchards cheap. The sausage-seller bought up all the fennel in the market, and gave it away to the poorer senators. So his popularity in that quarter is secured.

Cleon bursts in raging, while his rival jeers. Cleon will appeal to the Assembly, whom he can twist round his little finger. His rival is quite ready for a trial of strength; so both call to Demos to come out. Demos enters. Cleon complains furiously that he, the old gentleman's most loyal servant, has been foully abused and assaulted by the sausage-seller and the knights; but the sausage-seller hastens to aver that Cleon is not nearly so fond of Demos as he.

Act II

Demos is then formally established as judge, and Cleon opens his oration with protestations of affection.

> Exhausting all means for enhancing your fortune,
> Terror and force and entreaties importune;
> With a popular, pure, patriotical aim,
> Unmoved by compassion or friendship or shame.

The sausage seller says this is mere talk; it is he, not Cleon, who has provided Demos with a comfortable cushion—which delights Demos. Then he charges Cleon with continuing the war merely as enabling him to pilfer the more, undetected. Cleon's protests find Demos deaf; the old fellow is ready to believe whatever the sausage-man says. Cleon appeals to his record of victory, the trophy of shields from Sphacteria. The sau-

sage-man declares that the trophy has been set up as part of a conspiracy, so that Cleon's accomplices may have arms to their hands for a sudden insurrection; whereat Demos takes fright. Then Cleon, though he is a tanner, has never given Demos a new pair of boots—as the sausage-seller does—or a nice warm winter waistcoat. Cleon tries to save the situation by offering a cloak, but it is promptly rejected as smelling of the tanyard, and the offer is stigmatised as an attempt to poison the good man.

Demos delivers judgment. The sausage-seller has proved himself a most worthy and considerate person. Cleon petitions to be allowed to read some of his oracles before being dismissed. The sausage-seller promises to beat him in the matter of oracles, and the pair go off to get their papers. When they return, the sausage-seller's bundle is much the heavier. Cleon opens:

> Son of Erechtheus, mark and ponder well
> This holy warning from Apollo's cell.
> It bids thee cherish him, the sacred whelp,
> Who for thy sake doth bite and bark and yelp.
> Guard and protect him from the chattering jay—
> So shall thy juries all be kept in pay.

The sausage-seller counters:

> Son of Erechtheus, 'ware the gap-toothed dog,
> The crafty mongrel that purloins thy prog;
> Fawning at meals, and filching scraps away,
> The whiles you gape and stare another way.

Each oracle of Cleon's is promptly explained by the other in a most unfavourable sense, or capped by one with a hostile interpretation. Cleon propounds a vision in which he had seen Athene anointing Demos with health and happiness; but in the sausage-seller's vision she went on to anoint Cleon with garlic sauce. He wins on every round. The pair then start on a contest of promises, and then of services to Demos. They hurry off to procure attractive gifts. During their absence,

Demos explains to the chorus that he prefers knaves for his confidential servants, but keeps his eye on them, and upsets them at the right moment.

Cleon and the sausage-seller reappear. One brings a chair, the other a table, and there is a competition in the viands they set before Demos. When Cleon at last produces a pie, for which the sausage-seller has no counter attraction, he is tricked into putting it down; the sausage-seller snatches it, and presents it himself, remarking that this is just what Cleon had done about the prisoners from Sphacteria, who were not really his spoils, but those of Demosthenes.

Finally, Cleon is found to have a chest full of dainties, while the sausage-seller's is empty, because, as he explains, he has given his little all to his beloved Demos. Cleon, feeling himself beaten, fixes his last hope on finding that his rival is not the supplanter foretold by the oracle. But his answers show that his birth and education correspond, that he is a sausage-seller, that he sells his wares at the city gate. Despair seizes Cleon, who can no longer battle with his doom. The sausage-seller proclaims his own name—Agoracritus. Demos formally appoints him to the stewardship; the actors go out, leaving the knights.

The chorus now, as a preliminary to the finale, indulge in some personal lampoons.

Agoracritus the sausage-seller re-enters, to announce joyful news.

> Old Demos within has moulted his skin;
> I've cooked him and stewed him to render him stronger,
> Many years younger and shabby no longer.
> Where is he now? On the citadel's brow,
> Joyous and bold, as when feasting of old
> When his battles were ended, triumphant and splendid.
> There see him, behold, with the jewels of gold
> Entwined in his hair in the fashion of old;
> Our sovereign lord, in glory restored,
> Returning among us in royal array,
> Worthy the trophies of Marathon's day.

Demos comes forward to express his obligations to Agoracritus for making him feel a new man. What sort of a creature has he been? Agoracritus narrates the follies of the Athenian people, the clap-trap by which they had allowed themselves to be gulled, while Demos hangs an ashamed head. Finally, his new mentor offers him a fair damsel, that Peace whom Cleon had hidden away; and Cleon himself is consigned to end his days at the sausage-seller's old trade:

> At the gate of the city, where the allies and foreigners
> That be maltreated may be sure to find him.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

Festus: A Poem

I

God *surrounded by the* Angelic Hierarchy; *to whom enters* Lucifer

God: Eternity hath snowed its years upon them;
And the white winter of their age is come,
The world, and all its worlds; and all shall end.
Angels: Earth's end is sealed.
Angel of Earth: I, Lord, who with the luminous seven which lamp
Thy sun-throne, and with light thence filled, had heard
Some flying fame of swiftly destined close
Common to every orb; and seeing that mine

Philip James Bailey was born at Nottingham on April 22, 1816, and died there on September 6, 1902. "Festus," his one great book, may be said to have been the work of his life. On its publication in 1839 it created a profound sensation, and the young poet found himself famous; Tennyson expressed high admiration of the poem, and for a long while critics ranked Bailey above Browning. Bailey's other books were "The Angel World," afterwards incorporated in "Festus," "The Mystic, and Other Poems," and "The Age: a Colloquial Satire." But he was continually adding to his great epic-drama of "Festus." Each new edition was longer than the last, until in its final form it is probably the longest poem in the English language. The germinal idea of it may be traced to Goethe's "Faust"; its metaphysics blend the doctrines of Christianity with the transcendental speculations of Hegel; its pervading argument is that good is predestined to triumph over evil, and that by the infinite love of Heaven all mankind will be pardoned and redeemed at last.

Had barely touched the verge of betterness,
Though ready, ripe in sooth, for happier things,
Long hoped for by its best and worthiest;
That threatened doom, ...
To learn, me hither brings, learn now, alas!
Too true, the fateful fact . . .
But what is this?
I hear the beat of a strange, strong wing in Heaven;
Irregulate, wild. It makes towards the throne.
It is the Spirit of Evil. Woe is me!
Woe to the earth; to man. What seeks he here?
GOD: What would'st thou, Lucifer?
LUCIFER: The world-apple
Shows dead ripe. It wants plucking. Touch it thou,
Or I, and lo! the poor perfection falls.
GOD: What may to thee seem perfect oft in Heaven
Far other sheweth.
LUCIFER: Man, through ignorance first
And need of knowing, fell: now grown so wise,
He thinks he lacketh nothing; not even God . . .
Faith I have missed from earth this many an age;
Faith, is she here?
GOD: Faith is both there and here;
Participant of divine ubiquity.
Thy knowledge is defective. Faith is wise;
Or ignorant; as may be. Were I once more
Future to test, as in the passed, by proof
Of many or one, as erst, thou would'st fail.
LUCIFER: How fail?
I deemed me passably successful there
In Eden once; and everywhere since then,
Where'er man's heart hath planned its Paradise . . .
A youth there is I fain would have, given up
Wholly to me.
GOD: I know him. He is thine
To tempt. Him richen with what gifts thou wilt,
What might, what faculty. He'll still own grace

Not thine. Upon his soul no absolute power
Hast thou. All souls are mine; and mine for aye.
And I give thee leave to this that man may know
My love than all his sin more.

GUARDIAN ANGEL: Plead we may
Always for those we love, by leave divine.
And now thou summ'st all bounties, Lord, in him,
Choosing as test of human faithfulness
My ward, my charge. But thou, God, knowest the mould
Of mortals, and the infinite end the souls
Thou savest are predestined to in Heaven.
So be thy mercy mighty to this spirit
Fiend-threatened, nor permit him who presides
O'er hell's eternal holocaust too far
To tempt or tamper with man's mutable heart.

GOD: Know, angel-guard, thy charge, from first ordained
To prove his faith in God (that widening fields
Of blessed salvation, which is God to know
And His will do) shall with time's broadening bounds
Of knowledge equalled, match; and both be reaped
Together. Be Heaven's secret, this, reserved
Even from himself, he of man's race the last.
And lo! I hallow him to the ends of Heaven,
That though he plunge his soul in sin, like a sword
In water it shall no wise cling to him
For ever. Ill so holds not to aught made
Of love divine . . .
Thy charge for a time resigned,
Warn thou, and take thy leave. He shall not faint.
Strengthen him will I, as with a belt of stars.

II

[*Wood and water—a park. In the distance a mansion; with lawn and flower-garden bordering a little lake. Sunset.*]

FESTUS (*advancing*): This is to be a mortal and immortal,
To live within a death-bound circle, and be
That dark point where the shades of all things round,
Meet, mix, and deepen. Somewhere's truth, light. Where?
Oh! I feel like a seed in the cold earth,
Quickening at heart, and pining for the air.
Passion is destiny; the heart is its own fate . . .
It matters not how long we live, but how.
Sometimes we feel the wish across the mind
Rush, like a rocket tearing up the sky,
That we should join with God, and give the world
The slip; but while we wish the world turns round,
And peeps us in the face; the wanton world;
We feel it gently pressing down our arm,
The arm we had raised to do for truth such wonders;
We feel it softly bearing on our side;
We feel it touch and thrill us through the body;
And we are fools; and there's an end of us.
God of might!
Why madest thou not one spirit, like the sun,
To king the world? And oh, might mine have been
The sun-mind, how would I have warmed the world
To love and worship and bright life!

LUCIFER: Not thou.
Hadst thou more power—put case thou hadst thy wish,
It is vastly feasible—more would'st thou misuse.
But other matters first.

FESTUS: Who art thou, pray?
It seems as thou hadst grown out of the air.

LUCIFER: Thou knowest me well. If stranger to thine eye

I am not to thy heart.
FESTUS: Thou art a spirit.
I knew it. I am glad, yet tremble, too.
LUCIFER: Nay, rise; and I'll not say, for thine own sake,
That thou dost pray in private to the Devil.
FESTUS: Father of lies, thou liest.
LUCIFER: I am he . . .
And now thou kneel'st to Heaven. Fie, graceless boy!
Mocking thy Maker with a cast-off prayer;
For had not I the first fruits of thy faith?
FESTUS: Tempter, away! From all the crowds of life
Why single me? Why score the young green bole
For fellage? Go! Am I, the youngest, worst?
No. Light the fires of hell with other souls;
Mine shall not burn with thee . . .
LUCIFER: I heard thy prayer at sunset, scarce yet passed;
I saw thy secret longings, unsaid thoughts,
Which prey on the breast like night-fires on a heath.
And thou didst pray to God. Did He attend?
Or turn His eye from the great glass of things,
Wherein He worshippeth eternally
Himself, to thee one moment? He did not.
I tell thee naught He cares for men. I came,
And come to proffer thee the earth; to set thee
Upon a throne, the throne of will unbound;
To crown thy life with liberty and joy;
And make thee free and mighty, even as I am.
Not in a goblin size, nor cherub form,
But as the soul of hell and evil came I,
With leave to give the kingdom of the world,
The freedom of thyself.
FESTUS: Good! Prove thy powers.
Open the heavens and let me look on God;
Then I'll believe thee.
LUCIFER: Believe me first; then will I prove myself.

Pleasure and love and unimagined beauty;
All, all that be delicious, brilliant, great
Of worldly things are mine, and mine to give.
FESTUS: What can be counted pleasure after love?
Like the young lion which hath once lapped blood,
The heart can ne'er be coaxed back to aught else,
The worm of the world hath eaten out mine heart.
LUCIFER: I will renew it in thee. It shall be
The bosom favourite of every beauty,
Even like a rosebud. Thou shalt render happy,
By naming who may love thee. Come with me.

III

[*Surrendered by his* GUARDIAN ANGEL *to the tempter,* FESTUS *goes with* LUCIFER *through a night of stars, passes over a mountain at sunrise, and at noon enters the market-place of a country town, and meets the funeral procession of the girl he had loved and betrayed, of whom he had been telling Lucifer during their journey.*]

FESTUS: Night brings out stars as sorrow shows us truths:
Though many, yet they help not; bright, they light not.
They are too late to serve us; and sad things
Are aye too true. We never see the stars
Till we can see naught but them. So with truth . . .
Man hath a knowledge of a time to come;
His most important knowledge. I would deny
The present, if the future. . . . Oh, there is
A life to come, or all's a dream.
LUCIFER: And all
May be a dream. Thou seest in thine, men, deeds,
Clear, moving, full of speech and order. Why
May not, then, all this world be but a dream
Of God's? Fear not. Some morning God may waken.

FESTUS: Life's more than breath and the quick round of blood;
It is a great spirit and a busy heart.
The coward and the small in soul scarce do live.
We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings; not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

(*A funeral passes.*)

'Ah! what is this? 'A mystery sure resolved.
I felt as fascinated towards this spot.
Meseemed I saw a beckoning, as of bright
Invisible hands I could not choose but follow.

LUCIFER: Is this the funeral of the fair defunct
Thou told'st me of somewhile, with tears? Speak to them.

FESTUS: Whose funeral is this ye follow, friends?

LUCIFER: Would ye have grief, let me come. I am woe.

MOURNER: We want no grief, Festus! She died of grief.

FESTUS: Said'st thou she died? Oh, then, I knew her.

MOURNER: True.

FESTUS: Set down the body, I would look yet on her.
Not lovelier now than ever, only not.
And garlanded as for bridals.

MOURNER: True. What then?
Say not thou knewest not, thou, this crowned maid
Willed as death's bride, not thine, to be thus interred.

FESTUS: Her hopes I knew too well. Oh, no! I nought
Deny. I am doomed too many to offend.

CLARA: I feel as though her spirit hovered near,
Holy and pure it wafts me with its wings.

ELISSA: Their shadows strike across me. Let us move.
Friends wait us sorrowing where, hard by, her sires

Sleep in the marbled minster . . .
FESTUS: Behold them slowly westering on their way,
Like those bright lights that head heaven's starry bier.
Oh, let me to the hills, where none but God
Can overlook us; for I hate to breathe
The breaths, and think the thoughts, of other men,
In close and crowded cities where the skies
Frown like an angry father, mournfully.
Oh, but I love the hills; love loneliness,
Allwhere of desert shore, or wold scant-lifed.
Where there is nothing else, there is always God.

IV

[FESTUS *wins the heart of* CLARA, *a friend of the girl who died for love of him. He discourses of life, death, eternity, and the mysteries of good and evil with* LUCIFER, *who carries him an hour's flight round the earth, describing to him the kingdoms of the world, and brings him at length to a public place in a metropolis.*]

FESTUS: This I know,
I have been told, and taught, and trained to pray.
I pray; and have no answer; may as well
Wrestle with the wind . . .
God still is good; still tends o'er those He loves.
LUCIFER: Why, therefore, comes no answer to thy prayer?
FESTUS: It may be silence is the voice of God.
LUCIFER: Assent, or dissent; whether of the twain?
FESTUS: Off! I am torn to pieces. Let me try
And gather up myself into a man,
As once I was. I cannot live, and live
In endless doubt.
LUCIFER: Oh, if thou lov'st a creed,
Be pessimist, nihilist, an' thou wilt. There are

Who defy the Devil in their own hearts,
In dreams of everlasting nothingness.
FESTUS: Be what I may, I have done with thee. Dost hear?
LUCIFER: Thou can'st not mean this?
FESTUS: Once for all, I do.
LUCIFER: It is men who are deceivers, not the Devil.
The first and worst of all frauds is to cheat
Oneself. All sin is easy after that.
FESTUS: If thou darest
Lift but the finger of a thought of ill
Against me, and—thou durst not; mark, we part.
LUCIFER: Well, as thou wilt. Remember soon thy heart
Will shed its pleasures as thine eye its tears,
And both leave loathsome furrows. Let us away.
FESTUS: Give me the long, high bounding sense of life
Which cries, let me but leap into my grave,
And I'll not mind the when nor where. We never
Care less for life than when enjoying it . . .
Oh, for the young heart of the fountain playing,
Flinging its bright fresh feelings up to the skies
It loves and strives to reach; strives, loves in vain.
It is of earth, and never meant for Heaven.
Let us love both and die. The sphinx-like heart
Loathes life the moment that life's riddle is read.
The knot of our existence solved, all things
Loose-ended lie, and useless. Life is sad,
And, lo! we sigh and say, can this be all?
Oh, it is great to feel that nought of earth,
Hope, love, nor dread, nor care for what's to come,
Can check the royal lavishment of life;
But, like a steamer strewn upon the wind,
We fling ourselves to fate, and to the future.
For to die young is youth's divinest gift.
There is a firefly in the south but shines

When on the wing. So is't with mind. When once
We rest, we darken . . .
I cannot be content with less than Heaven.
Come; we are wasting moments here that now
Belong, of right, to immortality,
And to another world.

V

[*With* LUCIFER, FESTUS *journeys through Interstellar Space,* LUCIFER *relating how the angels fell. They pass into the Angel World, speaking with the dwellers therein, and* FESTUS *meets there with Angela, who had loved him on earth. They visit the Moon, then pass through Cloudland to Earth again, where they linger for a while with* HELEN, CHARLES, LUCY, *and others in the garden, singing and talking of the miracles of Nature and the wonders of the Universe. Thereafter* FESTUS, *with* LUCIFER, *goes back through Interstellar Space up and into the Central Sun, where the* ANGEL OF THE EARTH *continues and concludes the story of the Angel World. Thence they pass to the World's Outermost Orb, and so into Heaven and the presence of the* DEITY.]

LUCIFER: All-being God, I come to thee again;
Nor come alone. Morality is here.
Thou badest me do my will, and I have dared
To do it. I have brought him up to Heaven,
Assigned for a time to mine indulgent hand,
That thou, just judge, mayst judge 'twixt him and me.
Is not this creature by successful wile
Yet mine? Have I not caused him waste his years
In search of lore forbidden, forgotten? In chase
Of intermittent dreams philosophy gives
Brief brain-life to, and vague? And sins not one
Who God's best gift, in irrational plans,
Immoderately benevolent, wastes? All this,
In secret conclave with aspiring friends,

To work men's welfare in their own despite,
(To wish is weakness, mind's strength is to will),
Schemes such designs to realise. . . .
GUARDIAN ANGEL: Wish and will
Are his, I know, for good, yet; and of good's
Least sparkle Heaven is thrifty; ends, too, these
Beget sometimes in deeds.
GOD: What wouldst thou, Lucifer,
With him thou hast brought here with thee?
LUCIFER: Show him God.
GOD: No being, on part of whom death's curse through
Transfigured into blessing, rests, were it only faith
Upon his shadow, looks on God and lives,
Save by divine permission.
LUCIFER: Look and live.
Look, Festus, look!
FESTUS: God, sole and onemost; God,
Eternal fountain of the infinite, thou
On whose life tide the stars seem strewn like bubbles,
Forgive me that an atomie of being
Hath sought to see its Maker face to face.
GOD: Mortal, rise! Look on me!
FESTUS: Nought
Unless like dazzling darkness, see I . . .
Thy creature, God, am I! Oh, slay me not,
But bid some angel take me, or I die!
GUARDIAN ANGEL: Come hither, Festus!
FESTUS: Who art thou?
GUARDIAN ANGEL: I am one.
Who have e'er, till late, been by thee from thy birth.
Thy guardian genius, thy good angel, I;
Restrict somewhile to Heaven, at his demand
Who feared my warnings weighed more than his lures.
FESTUS: O angel, let me welcome thee!
GUARDIAN ANGEL: Nay, name me,
For by thy lips invoked at morn and eve,
My name I love.

FESTUS: Return we now?
GUARDIAN ANGEL: Return.
FESTUS: How vast it seems, this deep abyss of space
World-studded, 'neath our feet.
GUARDIAN ANGEL: Stars stranger still,
Nobler than those late visited we may find.
GOD: This weigh thou, mortal, thoughtful.
Ere thou findest
Again thy star, lo! Oriel of the Sun
Hath it in charge to show thee of the passed,
And how the spirit from age to age may fall
From birth-star down to death-star through all-sphere;
And show how yet, by rational rites, by life
Sweet, holy, penitent for the past; by firm
And pure aspirings for the future, soul
Eternal union with its Lord may win.
For, know all Angels, I have so made man
That his original excellence shall defeat
All he hath ill; his inborn goodness, sin
So outweigh finally, his soul shall live
By royal right of virtue in itself
Immortal, and here reign with us in Heaven.

VI

[*In Heaven,* FESTUS *meets and holds converse with the Spirit of his Mother. Then, departing, accompanied again by his* GUARDIAN ANGEL, *he rejoins* LUCIFER, *and passing through the Martian Sphere, they descend to Earth. After a time of music and light-hearted pleasure among certain of his Earth friends,* FESTUS *is alone with* HELEN *at her home by the river.*]

HELEN: Nay, nothing comes to us too soon but sorrow.
FESTUS: For all were happiness, if all might live
Long, or die soon enough; for even us.

Virtue they tell us lives in self-denial;
My virtue is indulgence.
HELEN: True virtue is one
With nature, or 'tis nothing. It is love.
Remember'st not when, the other eve, thy friend
The Student called, a tale was on thy tongue,
Out of the poets, about love and sorrow,
And happiness, and such things—he interrupted?
FESTUS: But tales of love are far more readily made
Than, made, remembered.
HELEN: Tell-tale, make one then.
FESTUS: Well, then, my story says there was a pair
Of lovers, once——
HELEN: Once! Nay, how singular!
FESTUS: But where they lived, indeed, I quite forget;
Say, anywhere; say here. Their names were—I
Forget those, too. Say, anyone's; say ours.
The lady was, of course, most beautiful,
And made her lover do just as she pleased;
He therefore doing unwisely, doing wrong;
Neglecting all in Heaven and earth, but her.
They met, sang, walked, talked folly, just as all
Such couples do; adored each other; thought,
Spoke, wrote, dreamed of and for, nought else in life
Than their sweet selves, and so on.
HELEN: Pray proceed.
FESTUS: That's all.
HELEN: Oh no!
FESTUS: Well, in earnest then,
She laid her finger on him, and he felt
As might a mass of formless marble feel
While feature after feature of a god
Were being wrought from out of it . . .
HELEN: I remember,
The one thing wise, good, I have ever done
Was to love thee.

VII

[LUCIFER *lures* FESTUS *into forgetfulness of* HELEN, *and fires him with an abandoned passion for* ELISSA. *He descends with* LUCIFER *and the* GUARDIAN ANGEL *into Hell, and finds hope of redemption even there. He resumes his life on earth, loses faith, and despairs; reaches the goal of his ambition and is throned as a king, bent on giving peace to all the world, only to find that the world wants neither him nor the peace he would bless it with; he sins, suffers, sorrows, and, always with* LUCIFER *tempting him and the* GUARDIAN ANGEL *strengthening him with higher thoughts, wins his way back to faith, repents, and dies. Then follows a vision of the Earth Millennial, and of Hades; Earth is judged and* FESTUS *ascends to Heaven.*]

GUARDIAN ANGEL: Approach, my Festus, spirit beloved, nor fear
Trespass again of evil, nor dread escape
From God's unmeasured grasp. This conflict passed,
Know all ye angels, earth's, with time, with life
Co-ordinate, and the victory God's of good.
LUCIFER: Mortal! I bow to thee, and would to the least
And lowest of all the spirits that God hath made;
Being in ill the worser, but that the curse
I am accursed with of impenitency,
Outlasts the elements—outlives all time.
FESTUS: All curses cease with time, all ill, all woe.
Blessings star forth for ever; but a curse
Is like a cloud—it passeth . . .
LUCIFER: Farewell, ye angels, look your last on me.
I go.
ANGELS: Hope still.

LUCIFER: My hope's to cease. I go.
Let me become but nothing, and all soul
Shall joy for ever. This, Lord, be mine end.
GOD: Stay, Spirit; it suits not Heaven's eternal laws
Of good that all create be at once unmade,
Nor yet that ill be immortal. In all space
Is joy and glory, and the spiritual spheres,
Exultant in the sacrifice of sin
And creatural defect, unfilled by faith,
Leap forth as though to welcome earth to Heaven.
Shadows are passed away. Through all is light.
Blessed with the blessed be again; for thus
Salvation to the lost accrues, far past
Thine ultimate thought, but wholly in scope of mine.
ANGELS: Yon distant skies
Seem teeming with a timidly nearing host
Of angels late self-exiled, who scarce know
Their seats of old constellate still in Heaven.
SAINTS: O marvellous mercy, God e'er blessing all.
ANGELS: Behold, they come, the legions of the lost,
Transformed already by the bare behest
Of God our Maker to the purest forms
Of seraph lustre.
FESTUS: So great His mercies are, so vast His love,
So infinite His wisdom, all things seem
Possible, be they only good and kind.
GUARDIAN ANGEL: Hither with me.
FESTUS: But where are those I love?
GUARDIAN ANGEL: Yon happy group.
FESTUS: Ah, blessed ones, come to me!
Are ye all here, too, with me?
ANGELS: All.
FESTUS: 'Tis Heaven.

P. A. CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS

The Barber of Seville

Persons in the Play

COUNT ALMAVIVA
FIGARO, *the Barber of Seville*
DOCTOR BARTHOLO
DON BAZILE
THE NOTARY
POLICE OFFICER
ROSINA

ACT I

A tall handsome man wrapped in a brown cloak is loitering in a lonely street in Seville, and watching the window of the balcony of Doctor Bartholo's house. At last he looks at his watch, saying:

Ah, I have come too early! Never mind. It's better to arrive too soon than miss seeing Rosina. Who the dickens is this intruder?

P. A. Caron de Beaumarchais, one of the wittiest and most versatile of Frenchmen, was born in Paris on January 24, 1732, and died there on May 19, 1779. His father was a clock-maker, and, at the age of twenty, young Beaumarchais was appointed watchmaker to Louis XV. By means of his talent as a harp player, he became a great court favourite, and, in this position, he was able to render some important services to the powerful financier, Paris-Duverney, by whose aid he rapidly became a millionaire. On the accession of Louis XVI. he lost his position at court, and resolved to reconquer it with his pen. Figaro the wit, the poet, the intriguer, is really Beaumarchais himself, and a representative of the French middle classes who were resolved to wrest all power from their decadent aristocracy by a sudden revolution. "The Barber of Seville," which was written in 1772, is only an introduction to the greater play which follows; but it would have made Beaumarchais immortal, even if it had not been succeeded by "The Marriage."

[*It is* FIGARO, *the barber of Seville. His guitar is slung over his shoulder, and, holding a bit of paper in one hand, and a pencil in the other, he sings gaily:*

Life is a jest,
So let us be jolly!
Live with a zest,
And delight in our folly.

Now, for the second verse:

Life is a play——

No, that's a platitude. Ah, I have it!

Dance, then, and sing,
Laughing deliriously;
Life is a thing
We mustn't take seriously.

Who's that in the doorway there? Count Almaviva, dressed like a poor scholar! Whatever brings my old master to Seville? How do you do, your excellency?

ALMAVIVA: Figaro! Whatever are you doing in Seville? Didn't I get you a government post in Madrid?

FIGARO: Yes, but I lost it. When the Minister heard that I was a poet he dismissed me, saying that a man who wrote verses must necessarily be lacking in ordinary ability.

ALMAVIVA: I remember what you were like when you were in my service—an idle, good-for-nothing—

FIGARO: So many virtues are required in a servant nowadays that few masters are worthy of being valets.

ALMAVIVA: Not bad! What did you do when you lost your post?

FIGARO: Convinced that a razor is a better means of livelihood than a pen, I became a barber. I wandered through Spain, welcomed in one town, imprisoned in another, praised here, blamed there; mocking fools, defying rogues; smiling at my own troubles, and shaving every chin that came my way.

ALMAVIVA: What has given you such a gay philosophy of life?

FIGARO: Continual misfortune. I laugh at everything for fear of being obliged to weep at it.

[*The window of the balcony of Doctor Bartholo's house opens suddenly.* ROSINA, *a very beautiful girl, leans over, and* BARTHOLO, *her old peevish guardian, stands by her, watching her with jealous eyes.*

ALMAVIVA (*pulling* FIGARO *into the doorway*): Come in here, or you will spoil everything.

BARTHOLO: What's that paper you are holding?

ROSINA: A song—"Love Will Find Out the Way." (*She lets the paper fall into the street.*) Oh, I've dropped my song! Run and get it, doctor, or it will be lost.

[BARTHOLO *leaves the window, and* ROSINA *puts her pretty head out and sees* COUNT ALMAVIVA.

ROSINA: Pick it up, quick!

[ALMAVIVA *seizes it, and withdraws.* BARTHOLO *then comes out of the house, and looks around.*

BARTHOLO: Wherever is it? I can't find it anywhere. She has tricked me.

[*He rushes to the balcony and slams the window, draws the shutter, and locks it with a key.* COUNT ALMAVIVA *and* FIGARO *steal out of the doorway.*

ALMAVIVA: Now we will examine this mysterious song. Oh, joy! It is a letter—(*reading*) "Your eagerness excites my curiosity. As soon as my guardian goes out, come and sing under my window, and tell me who you are."

FIGARO (*imitating the voice of* ROSINA): "Oh, I've dropped my song!" Ha, ha, ha! Oh, these women! How did your excellency come to fall in love with this pretty prisoner?

ALMAVIVA: Six months ago I met by chance on the Prado at Madrid the most beautiful girl—well, you've just seen her. I've spent weeks trying to find her. A few days ago I discovered that her name was Rosina, that she was of noble birth, an orphan, and married to an old doctor of Seville called Bartholo.

FIGARO: She isn't the doctor's wife, but only his ward; but he means to marry her to-morrow.

ALMAVIVA: Then I haven't a moment to lose. Do you know this Bartholo?

FIGARO: I'm his barber, his surgeon, and his general assistant.

ALMAVIVA (*embracing him*): Ah, Figaro, my angel, my liberator, if you could only get me into the house! Half an hour with my Rosina, and I could rescue her from that old ruffian.

FIGARO: I will doctor all the doctor's household.

ALMAVIVA: No! No poisoning!

FIGARO: Love has given you too lively an imagination. I was only thinking of a good sleeping draught. Ha, another idea! The Regiment of the Infante has just arrived in Seville.

ALMAVIVA: The colonel is a friend of mine.

FIGARO: Excellent! Get your friend to billet you at once on the doctor.

ALMAVIVA: A splendid idea. Look, here is our man. Get in the doorway.

[*They hide themselves as* BARTHOLO *comes out.*

BARTHOLO (*speaking to a servant*): Don't let anyone in. I am going to Don Bazile.

ALMAVIVA: Who is this Don Bazile?

FIGARO: A poor wretch of a musician who gives singing lessons to Rosina.

ALMAVIVA: Singing lessons? It's time I gave my darling Rosina a singing lesson, isn't it?

FIGARO: Yes, here is my guitar. Tell her you are Count Almaviva, and you will win her at once.

ALMAVIVA: No, I wish to be loved for myself alone, and not for my name and my wealth. I am now Lindor, a poor, wandering scholar.

[*Taking* FIGARO'S *guitar, he sings:*

Go, little song, your singer implores you;
Go, little song, and sing to her clearly.

Lindor admires you, and loves, and adores you;
Lindor adores you and loves you dearly.

[ROSINA *takes up the air, and replies behind the closed window*:

Go, little song, go back to your singer;
Go to your singer, and sing to him clearly:
"Here no longer you now must linger,
But come again if you love her dearly."

[COUNT ALMAVIVA *and* FIGARO *depart.*

ACT II

ROSINA *is sitting in her room at a table, writing. It is near twilight.*

ROSINA: Ah, what is the use of writing letters to Lindor when I cannot send them!

[FIGARO *enters.*

ROSINA: Who was that young gentleman with you, this morning, Figaro?

FIGARO: My friend Lindor, a poor scholar. He is coming to see you this evening.

ROSINA: He mustn't. It makes me tremble.

FIGARO: Send him a letter telling him he mustn't.

ROSINA (*giving him the letter she has just written*): I haven't the time to write this over again, but tell him —— Here is the doctor! Whatever shall we do?

FIGARO: I must retire.

[*He gets in a cupboard, and* BARTHOLO *stalks into the room.*

BARTHOLO: Do you know what that scoundrel Figaro has done? Drugged all my servants! What has he done that for? Ah! Is he after you?

ROSINA: After me? Do you think I would run away with a barber?

BARTHOLO: Wasn't it for him you dropped that paper this morning?

ROSINA (*in great vexation*): Since you want to know,

I will tell you everything. Figaro came to see me to-day, and I had an interesting talk with him, and found him a very likable man.

[*As* ROSINA *walks out of the room,* DON BAZILE *enters, an old, thin, shabby creature, with cunning eyes.*

BAZILE: My dear Bartholo. I am sorry I was out when you called. I have some bad news for you. You have heard of Count Almaviva?

BARTHOLO: The man who was looking for Rosina for months in Madrid?

BAZILE: He is now in Seville. He goes out every morning in various disguises.

BARTHOLO: I must marry Rosina before she hears of this count.

BAZILE: It's difficult to marry a girl against her will, you know. But give me a hundred pistoles, and I will arrange a marriage to-night.

BARTHOLO: Very well. I will see you to the door, as all my servants are unwell, and I want to keep it bolted.

[*As they leave the room* FIGARO *pops out of the cupboard.*

FIGARO: Ah, bolt it well, Bartholo, and I will open it for the count as I go out.

ROSINA (*running in*): What, are you still here, Figaro? Go down quickly by the back staircase, or I shall die of fright.

[FIGARO *departs, and* BARTHOLO *returns.*

BARTHOLO: I have just learnt something. What did that scoundrel Figaro come to see you for this morning? I swear he brought you a letter from somebody. (*He takes hold of* ROSINA'S *right hand and looks at it.*) Yes, you wrote a reply. Look at the ink on the tip of your finger.

ROSINA (*speaking to herself*): I do believe that jealousy is making this wretched creature intelligent at last. (*Aloud*) I have only been inking in the flower on the waistcoat that you wanted me to embroider for you.

BARTHOLO: How good of you, señora! If you did not blush so furiously I really might believe you.

[*There is a loud clatter on the stairs. The door is flung open, and* ALMAVIVA, *in the uniform of a cavalry officer, staggers into the room, singing at the top of his voice.*

BARTHOLO: What impudence! A drunken soldier! Retire to your room, Rosina.

[*Still singing,* ALMAVIVA, *with the gait of a drunken man, advances towards* ROSINA.

ALMAVIVA: Er—er—er, which of you two ladies is called Dr. Balordo? (*In a whisper to* ROSINA): I am Lindor.

BARTHOLO: I am Dr. Bartholo. What do you mean by this intrusion?

ALMAVIVA: Well, my old Barbaro, since that is your name, I have come to stay with you. Here is a little friendly letter from my colonel.

BARTHOLO (*taking the paper with an angry movement, and reading it out loud*): "It is hereby ordered that Dr. Bartholo shall receive, and board and lodge for one night, the bearer of this billet, Captain Lindor, of the Regiment of the Infante."

ROSINA: Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

[*She begins to laugh wildly.*

BARTHOLO: You drunken wretch! Get out of my house, and tell your colonel that I am exempted from lodging men of your description.

ALMAVIVA (*aside*): Oh, heavens, what a frightful disappointment.

BARTHOLO: Ha, ha! That sobers you a little! Now, out of this!

ALMAVIVA: Not until you show me the order of exemption.

BARTHOLO: You shall see it at once. It is in my desk in the other room.

[*In his absence,* COUNT ALMAVIVA *gets up to give* ROSINA *a letter, but before he can do so* BARTHOLO *returns.*

BARTHOLO: Gently, sir, I do not care for a drunken soldier to talk to my wife.

ALMAVIVA: Your wife? I took her for your great-granddaughter.

BARTHOLO (*handing him a parchment*): Enough of this. Here is the exemption.

[ALMAVIVA *throws the parchment on the floor.*

BARTHOLO (*in a furious voice*): If you do not leave my house my servants shall throw you out.

ALMAVIVA: Ha, ha! I'll fight. I'm good at that. (*To* ROSINA) Have you ever seen a battle, señora? You attack your enemy like this.

[*He pushes the doctor with his right hand, and with his left hand he throws the letter into* ROSINA'S *lap.*

BARTHOLO: Will you go at once, you drunken disreputable scoundrel; or shall I call in the police?

ALMAVIVA (*still pretending to be drunk*): Er—er—er—Dr. Brabaro. Since you won't fight, I'll see whether I can't get my colonel to billet me on somebody a little more hospitable. [*He staggers out.*

ACT III

It is now evening, and BARTHOLO *is sitting alone in the dark and shuttered room.*

BARTHOLO: What a bad temper she's in! I suppose she guesses Don Bazile's arranging our marriage tonight. (*There is a knock at the door.*) Who is that?

[*He goes out, and returns with* COUNT ALMAVIVA, *who is now dressed as a student.*

ALMAVIVA: Señor, I am Alonzo, the pupil of Don Bazile. He has been taken ill, and he sent me to give Señora Rosina her singing lesson.

BARTHOLO: Bazile ill! I will go and see him.

ALMAVIVA (*in an aside*): He'll find out! (*aloud*) Wait, I have a very important message, er—er—er——

BARTHOLO: Well, speak up, man.

ALMAVIVA (*raising his voice*): Count Almaviva has received a letter from Señora Rosina.

BARTHOLO (*frightened*): Whisper it.

ALMAVIVA (*in a still louder voice*): Don Bazile asked me to make inquiries in the matter, and I have obtained Rosina's letter to Count Almaviva.

BARTHOLO: Don't speak so loud.

[*He steals to the door to see if* ROSINA *is listening.*

ALMAVIVA (*speaking to himself*): If I can only warn Rosina, what a clever stroke it will be to let him read the letter. (*Aloud*) Dr. Bartholo, is not this the handwriting of your ward?

BARTHOLO (*taking the letter, and shouting with anger as he reads it*): Ah, the perfidious wretch, it is truly her handwriting! What is this? (*Reading*): "Since you have told me your name and your condition of life——"

ALMAVIVA (*frightened*): Don't shout. Wait until you are married before you let Rosina know anything about the letter. Don Bazile will have everything ready by to-night. He arranged it all with a notary before he fell ill. Can't you see my plan? If Rosina refuses to marry you——

BARTHOLO: And she will refuse!

ALMAVIVA: Then I will help you. I will show her the letter, and tell her that I got it from a wicked woman to whom the count has sacrificed her. Then, you see, shame and spite and grief will make her throw herself into your arms.

BARTHOLO (*laughing*): A magnificent idea! You must give her a lesson now, so that when the time comes she will be well acquainted with you.

[*He goes out, and returns, dragging* ROSINA *with him.*

ROSINA: I tell you again I will not have any more singing lessons, either from Don Bazile or from this pupil

of his. (*Turning round, she sees her lover, and cries out*) Ah!

BARTHOLO: What is the matter?

ROSINA: I've sprained my foot. (*She looks at the count*) It has given me a heart attack.

BARTHOLO: Where's an armchair?

[*He goes out of the room to find one.*

ALMAVIVA: Ah, Rosina! I've a thousand things to tell you.

ROSINA: He will not leave us together.

BARTHOLO (*bringing an armchair*): Here, darling, sit down. After this accident, Señor Alonzo, we must put off the singing lesson. Good-bye!

ROSINA: No; I'm feeling much better already. I am sure a little music would cheer me up!

[ALMAVIVA *goes to the clavecin and takes up a song.*

ALMAVIVA: "Love Will Find Out the Way." I'm sure this will suit you, señora.

ROSINA: Yes; that is my favourite air.

[COUNT ALMAVIVA *plays on the clavecin, and* ROSINA *sings:*

Over the mountains
  And over the waves;
Under the fountains
  And under the graves;
Under floods that are deepest,
  Which Neptune obey;
Over the rocks that are steepest,
  Love will find out the way.

You may esteem him
  A child for his might;
Or you may deem him
  A coward from his flight;
But if she whom love doth honour
  Be conceal'd from the day,
Set a thousand guards upon her,
  Love will find out the way.

[*They are interrupted by the arrival of* FIGARO.

BARTHOLO: Figaro, how dare you enter my house, you scoundrel! You've drugged all my servants; they're sleeping as if they are never going to wake.

FIGARO: Marceline said she had a headache, and neither Eveillé nor La Jeunesse looked well, so I brought out your medicine chest, and gave them a little opium.

BARTHOLO: A little! You stupid fool. It's a wonder they are alive! What new mischief have you come to work now?

FIGARO: To shave you, to be sure. Look at your chin! Three days' growth there, I'll be bound. Will you come into your room?

BARTHOLO: No, you must shave me here. Get the things you want; here is the key. (*Whispering to* ALMAVIVA) He's the rascal who took the letter to the count. It's better to trust him with the keys than to give him the chance of speaking to Rosina.

[*There is a clatter of broken crockery, and* BARTHOLO *rushes out to see what* FIGARO *has broken.*

ALMAVIVA: Isn't Figaro clever, Rosina? He is getting the key to this window, and we will climb up the balcony at night and carry you off. Oh, but I forgot to say that I have been compelled to give the letter you sent me to——

BARTHOLO (*suddenly returning with* FIGARO): He has broken everything. Why, here is Don Bazile!

[*The singing-master enters the room hat in hand.*

ROSINA, COUNT ALMAVIVA, *and* FIGARO *stare at him in consternation.*

BARTHOLO: Ah, Bazile, you soon get over your illness! Your pupil, Señor Alonzo, quite frightened me by the account he gave of you.

BAZILE: Señor Alonzo. I do not understand.

ALMAVIVA (*whispering to* BARTHOLO): Tell him to keep the secret, or he will make Rosina suspicious.

BARTHOLO (*whispering to* BAZILE): Don't say he isn't your pupil, or you will spoil everything.

BAZILE: I do not understand!

ALMAVIVA (*in a whisper, giving him a handful of gold*): We want you to go away.

BAZILE: Now I understand. I really am not feeling very well. [*He goes out.*

FIGARO: Doctor, I must shave you.

[*He fixes a napkin round* BARTHOLO'S *neck, and begins to lather him. This gives the lovers an opportunity for a quiet talk in the corner. But* BARTHOLO *sees them, and pushes* FIGARO *aside, and creeps up behind the clavecin.*

ALMAVIVA (*whispering to* ROSINA): Old Bartholo wouldn't let me stay, so I took out your letter, and tried to deceive him.

BARTHOLO (*pushing between them*): You tried to deceive me. You villain! Rosina, retire at once!

ALMAVIVA: My dear doctor, if this is the way you always go on, I am not surprised that this young lady refuses to become your wife.

ROSINA: His wife! Do you think that I would ever marry this peevish old wretch? No; I will give my heart and my hand to any man brave enough to rescue me from this horrible prison.

[*She leaves the room.*

BARTHOLO (*almost suffocating with anger*): Thieves, scoundrels, liars! Out with you both!

FIGARO: The man's going mad. Come, my dear Alonzo, we had better leave him.

[*Laughing heartily, they run down the stairs into the street.*

ACT IV

It is midnight, and BARTHOLO *and* BAZILE *are talking in the shuttered room by candle light.*

BARTHOLO: How is it the notary cannot come before four o'clock?

BAZILE: Figaro has retained him for his niece's marriage.

BARTHOLO: He hasn't a niece. It's some trick. Go and tell the notary to come immediately.

[*As he goes to let him out,* ROSINA *enters the room.*

ROSINA: I thought I heard someone speaking. It is past midnight, and Lindor has not come.

BARTHOLO (*coming back*): Rosina, what are you doing here? Never mind! I have something to tell you. Do you know this letter?

[*He shows her the letter* ALMAVIVA *gave him.*

ROSINA: Heavens!

BARTHOLO: I want to talk to you as a friend. This letter which you wrote to Count Almaviva——

ROSINA (*in astonishment*): Count Almaviva!

BARTHOLO: You see the sort of man this count is. As soon as he received it he laughed at you, and gave it to another woman, who sent it to me. Figaro and Alonzo are his vile agents.

ROSINA: What, Lindor the vile agent of this count? The shame of it! Doctor Bartholo, do you still dcsire to marry me?

BARTHOLO: At once, my dear.

ROSINA: Oh, how humiliated I feel! The wretches arranged to carry me off to-night. They have stolen your key of the window.

BARTHOLO: Shut yourself up in Marceline's room. I will fetch the police, and have them arrested as common thieves.

[*He rushes out into the street just as* COUNT ALMAVIVA *and* FIGARO *unlock the window and enter.*

ALMAVIVA: At last, my beautiful Rosina! How I adore you!

ROSINA (*indignantly*). You adore me? Miserable Lindor! I know all. You have sold me to Count Almaviva. Do you know this letter?

ALMAVIVA: I was going to tell you about it during the

singing lesson. I made use of it in order to win Bartholo's confidence. (*He throws off his cloak, and appears in a splendid costume.*) My darling, I am Count Almaviva, who has been dying of love for you ever since he saw you at Madrid six months ago.

ROSINA (*falling in his arms*): I was going to marry Bartholo just to spite you!

FIGARO (*looking out of the window*): We are prisoners; the ladder has been taken away.

ROSINA: The doctor has done it. I told him everything. He has gone to fetch the police.

FIGARO (*still looking out of the window*): They have opened the door; they are coming in!

[COUNT ALMAVIVA *draws his sword. But he sheathes it with a laugh when he sees it is* DON BAZILE *and the notary.*

NOTARY: Is this the couple that wish to be married?

ALMAVIVA: Yes, sir; you were engaged to marry Señora Rosina and me to-night at the house of Figaro, the barber. But this house will do just as well. Have you the marriage contract?

NOTARY: I have two marriage contracts—one for his excellency, Count Almaviva, and one for Doctor Bartholo. It is strange; both of them are with a Señora Rosina.

ALMAVIVA: There, we have signed our names! Now Figaro and Don Bazile must sign as witnesses.

BAZILE: But—I do not understand!

ALMAVIVA (*giving him a handful of gold*): You never understand anything. Sign it now, quick!

[BAZILE *signs the marriage contract just as* BARTHOLO *enters the room with a crowd of armed policemen.*

BARTHOLO: Arrest everybody at once!

POLICE OFFICER (*seeing* COUNT ALMAVIVA): But these men are not thieves.

ALMAVIVA: I am, sir. I have robbed the doctor of this charming lady.

BARTHOLO: It's not a legal marriage. Where are your two witnesses?

NOTARY: Figaro and Don Bazile.

BARTHOLO: Rosina is a minor, and I am her guardian. I will not consent to the marriage.

ALMAVIVA: Very well, we will go to the law.

POLICE OFFICER: Your excellency has the right to take the lady away. In my opinion, Doctor Bartholo's refusal to consent to this honourable marriage shows he is afraid of having to account for the money belonging to his ward.

ALMAVIVA: I don't care about that. If he will consent to the marriage, he can keep the money.

BAZILE: As you can't have the lady, Bartholo, stick to the gold.

BARTHOLO: You never think of anything but money, Bazile. Still, I may as well keep it. (*He signs the contract.*) By taking the ladder away I only hastened on their wedding. I ought to have been more careful.

FIGARO: More intelligent. No, let us be fair. When two young lovers resolve to outwit an old man, you may be sure that "Love will find out the way."

The Marriage of Figaro

Persons in the Play

COUNT ALMAVIVA	DOCTOR BARTHOLO
FIGARO	DON BAZILE
CHERUBINO	MARCELINE
COUNTESS ROSINA	SUZANNE

ACT I

FIGARO, MARCELINE, *and* BARTHOLO *are talking together in a room in Count Almaviva's castle, Aguas Frescas, about three leagues from Seville.*

FIGARO: Good day, my good doctor! What brings you to the castle? My marriage with Suzanne?

BARTHOLO: I have come to prevent it, as you prevented my marriage with Rosina.

FIGARO: I see! You mean to force me to marry Marceline? Good-bye. While you are discussing my

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Not only is "The Marriage of Figaro" a fine and entertaining piece of literature, but it is also a work of high historic importance. By means of this comedy Beaumarchais did more than any other playwright of his age to bring about the French Revolution. Written in 1778, it was not played until 1784. Louis XVI. exclaimed, when it was read to him: "It is detestable! It shall never be performed!" Thereupon the Parisians were agog to see the forbidden play. Everybody repeated the jibe of Figaro, that only little minds were afraid of little writings. In order to show that they were not frightened by Beaumarchais' subtle and witty attack, several noblemen invited him to read the play at their mansions. Even the Tsar, Paul I., who was then in Paris, attended the readings. Louis XVI. could no longer withhold permission, and on April 27, 1784, the comedy was publicly performed. "What have you done to earn your high rank, your immense wealth, your great power? You have taken the trouble to be born—nothing more!" In this sally against his despicable master, Figaro gave expression to the contempt which the French middle classes felt for their aristocracy.

breach of promise with your old housekeeper, I will dress for the wedding. [*He goes out.*

BARTHOLO: The rascal is as impudent as ever. Well, Marceline, when is Count Almaviva going to have your case against Figaro tried?

MARCELINE: To-day at twelve o'clock. I am sure I shall win. Some time ago I lent Figaro two thousand piastres, on the condition that he should repay the money on demand, and marry me. Now, the villain is going to marry Suzanne, the maid of the Countess Rosina, without giving me back my money.

BARTHOLO: But I thought that Count Almaviva was flirting with Suzanne?

MARCELINE: So he is. . . . But here she comes with Cherubino, the shameless little page of Count Almaviva, who is always trying to make love to Countess Rosina. Don't let them see us together.

[*They go out, and* SUZANNE *and* CHERUBINO *enter.*

CHERUBINO: The count is sending me away. He saw me speaking to you yesterday, and came up to me in a fury, and said that I must go into the army at once. If my beautiful godmother, Countess Rosina, does not intercede for me, I shall be deprived for ever of the happiness of seeing you, Suzanne!

SUZANNE: Of seeing me? So it's my turn now? You've deserted the mistress for the maid?

CHERUBINO: Ah, Suzanne, she is beautiful and noble, but so unapproachable!

[*He tries to kiss her.*

SUZANNE: I will box your ears, señor! I will go at once and complain to my mistress! Far from pleading for you, I shall tell the count.

CHERUBINO: I am lost!

[*He sees the count entering the room, and throws himself in dismay behind an armchair.*

SUZANNE: What do you with me, my lord? If someone found you with me——

ALMAVIVA: I should be sorry, my dear, if we were discovered together just before your marriage, but you know what interest I take in you. The king has just appointed me ambassador at London. I will consent to your marriage with Figaro, and take you with me to London, and give him an excellent post, if you will only promise——

SUZANNE: I will promise nothing; nothing. Can't you be content with your own wife, and permit Figaro and me to live happily together?

BAZILE (*speaking outside in the passage*): Where has the count got to? I must speak to him.

ALMAVIVA: Bazile, the singing master! What a nuisance! If he sees us together he is sure to gossip to Rosina. Where can I hide?

[*He runs towards the armchair, but* SUZANNE *gets between him and* CHERUBINO. *While he is gently pushing her aside, the page creeps into the chair and crouches down, and* SUZANNE *throws a cover over him, just as* BAZILE *enters the room.*

BAZILE: Ah, Suzanne! What a happy girl you are! But you must not let the count see that little rascal, Cherubino, making love to you.

SUZANNE (*angrily*): And you are an incorrigible scandalmonger! I am sure that——

BAZILE: He makes love both to the maid and the mistress. The way he follows Countess Rosina——

ALMAVIVA (*jumping up*): Bazile! How dare you bring the name of my wife into—— Ah!

[*He sees* CHERUBINO'S *feet, and pulls the cover off the page, and angrily drags him from the chair.*

ALMAVIVA: So, Suzanne, this is why you did not want me to stay with you? Nice going on for a young lady on her marriage-day! I certainly shall not allow the marriage to take place. Figaro is a man I esteem and love, and I cannot permit him to waste himself on a

shameless little hussy like you. As for you, señor (*turning to* CHERUBINO), leave the castle at once!

CHERUBINO: I only came here to ask Suzanne to get the countess to intercede with you for me. I am too young yet to join the army!

ALMAVIVA: If you are old enough to make love to two women at once, you are old enough to be a soldier.

[*Poor little* CHERUBINO *begins to cry, and* SUZANNE *tries to comfort him.* COUNT ALMAVIVA *stalks out of the room, followed by* BAZILE.

ACT II

COUNTESS ROSINA *and* SUZANNE *are talking together in the countess's bed-chamber in the castle of Aguas Frescas.*

ROSINA (*first sorrowfully, and then in anger*): Ah, it's clear from what you say, my husband no longer loves me! I have wearied him with kindnesses and fatigued him with affection. That is my own fault. But you, my dear girl, shall not suffer for it. I will see that you are married to your Figaro. Here he is at last.

[FIGARO *enters.*

SUZANNE: What a time you have been, dear! We have been waiting impatiently for you. Have you got some clever plan ready?

FIGARO: Yes, and I have carried it out. In order to make my master leave my wife alone, I have given him that which will make him watch over his own.

ROSINA: Over me? This is going too far!

FIGARO: It is the only way with a man of this sort. I have sent him an anonymous letter warning him that some gallant will be after you, madame, at the ball this evening. He is upset about it already. He does not know what to do, but I'm sure he will not try to stop my marriage.

SUZANNE: Marceline will do that.

FIGARO: No. The count will decide against her at the trial. For you must promise to meet him in the evening in the garden. Then, we will dress up Cherubino in your clothes, and surprise the count with him. I will go at once and send Cherubino to you, and you can fit your dress on him. [FIGARO *goes out.*

ROSINA: But how can I receive this young man in my bedroom?

SUZANNE: There will be two of us, madame. I will go and get my dress.

[*She departs, and returns with* CHERUBINO.

CHERUBINO: Ah, my dear godmother! Has Suzanne told you? The count has sent me away.

ROSINA: No, you must stay till this evening. Then I will make my husband forgive you. Now, we want you to try one of Suzanne's dresses.

[SUZANNE *takes his coat off, and begins to dress him. But, finding that she has not brought the collar of the dress, she goes out to fetch it, locking the door behind her. She has scarcely been gone a moment, when* COUNT ALMAVIVA *arrives.*

ALMAVIVA (*knocking furiously at the door*): Why have you locked yourself in, madame?

ROSINA: My husband! Whatever shall I do! And after Figaro writing him that letter! He will be mad with jealousy.

ALMAVIVA: Open your door, I say!

CHERUBINO: After the scene this morning, he will kill me on the spot.

[*He runs into a wardrobe in the corner of the bedroom and the* COUNTESS ROSINA *locks him in, and takes out key. Then she admits her husband into the room.*

ALMAVIVA: You are not in the habit of locking your door. Why did you not let me in at once?

ROSINA: I was—er—sewing, yes, sewing with Suzanne. She has gone out to get a dress.

ALMAVIVA (*looking at her closely*): What is the matter? You seem to be upset.

[CHERUBINO *knocks over a chair in the wardrobe.*

ALMAVIVA (*in a furious voice*): I thought so! Who is in that wardrobe, madame?

[*He springs across the room and tries to open the wardrobe.*

ROSINA: Suzanne is in there. She was all undressed when you knocked at the door. That is why I did not let you in at once.

ALMAVIVA: But you said just now that she had gone out to get a dress. (*He pulls wildly at the door of the wardrobe, shouting*): Suzanne, are you in here? Speak up, at once!

ROSINA: Suzanne, I forbid you to reply. (*To Almaviva*): I have never heard of such tyranny!

[*During the quarrel,* SUZANNE *has quietly returned. Grasping the situation, she creeps into an alcove, and draws the curtain, and hides herself.*

ALMAVIVA: I am resolved to see at once who is in this wardrobe. Give me the key, or I will call the servants, and have the door smashed in!

ROSINA: That would be a pretty scandal.

ALMAVIVA: I will get a hammer, and break the door open myself. Come with me, and then I shall know that nothing has been changed while I am gone.

[*He leads his wife out of the room, and locks the door.* SUZANNE *runs from the alcove and unlocks the wardrobe, from which* CHERUBINO *comes out, pale and weeping.*

SUZANNE: Leave the room at once!

CHERUBINO (*trembling with fear*): But how can I leave? The door's locked.

SUZANNE: The window! Jump it! Even if you break a bone or two, that will be better than being killed. And you will save the countess.

CHERUBINO (*opening the window, and looking, terrified, at the drop of twenty feet*): Yes! I will do it for her sake.

[*He jumps out of the window, and* SUZANNE *runs and shuts herself in the wardrobe just as* COUNT ALMAVIVA *and* COUNTESS ROSINA *return with a key to the wardrobe.*

ALMAVIVA: Ah, this explains the strange letter I have just received. There is a man in there!

ROSINA: No. Only a child. Suzanne and I were dressing him up for a masquerade. It is—Cherubino.

ALMAVIVA: The key! The key! I will kill him!

[*He snatches the key from her hand and draws his sword. His wife sinks to the ground and clasps his knees.*

ROSINA: Spare him! I swear he is innocent.

[*The count roughly springs away from her, unlocks the wardrobe and flings the door open, and then recoils in utter amazement.*

ALMAVIVA: Heavens! It is Suzanne!

SUZANNE (*coming out laughing*): I will kill him! Kill him then, this wicked little page!

ALMAVIVA (*utterly confused*): Is this a comedy?

ROSINA (*who was just as much astonished as her husband, but has quickly recovered herself*): No, my lord, I am weary of your base infidelity, and your insane jealousy. I have tried you for the last time. This outrage is unpardonable. As soon as I have seen Suzanne and Figaro properly married, I intend to retire to the Convent of Ursulines. To think that you are the same man that loved me so passionately when I was the ward of Doctor Bartholo!

ALMAVIVA: Oh, Rosina! Won't you forgive me?

[*He looks with pleading eyes at his wife; she turns away, and he walks slowly out of the room. When he is gone,* SUZANNE *begins to laugh merrily, but the* COUNTESS *remains pale and sorrowful.*

Act III

Count Almaviva *is thoughtfully walking up and down the hall of audience in the castle of Aguas Frescas.*

Almaviva (*speaking to himself*): The justices of the peace and the lawyers will soon arrive to try the case between Figaro and Marceline. I do not know whether it would be better to force the rascal to marry the old woman, or let him have Suzanne. I feel sure he is at the bottom of the trick Rosina and Suzanne played on me just now. Here he comes. I must try and sound him. (Figaro *enters.*) I've been waiting for you. Servants take longer to dress than their masters do.

Figaro: They haven't any valets to help them.

Almaviva: I thought of taking you with me to London, but, on second thoughts, I don't think you'll suit me.

Figaro: Well, I dare say I should be happier if I remained in Spain with my wife.

Almaviva (*aside*): Suzanne has told him all. He will have to marry the old woman. (*Aloud*) Tell the servants to arrange the hall at once for the trial. It's time it began.

[Figaro *goes out,* Suzanne *enters, and runs up to the count.*

Suzanne: Can you lend me your smelling-salts? The countess has the vapours. I will bring them back in an instant.

Almaviva (*giving her the scent-bottle*): Don't trouble to return it to me. You may want it yourself.

Suzanne: I? Girls in my position are not troubled with the vapours. It is a noble malady which only fine ladies get.

Almaviva: But when you find that the man you are in love with cannot marry you——

Suzanne: Are you going to force Figaro to wed

an old woman like Marceline? Why, I can pay the debt with the dowry you promised me!

ALMAVIVA: Which I promised you? Yes, if you will meet me in the garden to-night. No meeting, no dowry.

SUZANNE (*making a curtsey*): And no marriage, no meeting.

[*He gives her the scent-bottle, and tries to kiss her, but she evades him with a laugh.*

ALMAVIVA: She is mine at last!

[*He steps aside, and* FIGARO *returns.*

SUZANNE (*to* FIGARO): You will win the breach of promise suit, my dear. I have arranged it all.

[*She goes out, and* FIGARO *follows her.*

ALMAVIVA: I have arranged it all! Have you indeed, miss? So it was a plot, was it? Ah, Marceline, after all, shall win her case.

[*While he is speaking the justices, the lawyers,* MARCELINE, BARTHOLO, *and a crowd of spectators enter the hall.* COUNT ALMAVIVA *takes his position on the platform among the other justices, and the case begins.*

THE CLERK: Barbe Agar Magdeleine Nicole Marceline of Aguas Frescas *versus* Figaro—surname in blank. How's that?

FIGARO (*rising up in court*): If you please, gentlemen, I do not know my surname. I am a foundling. I do not know the name either of my father or my mother.

BARTHOLO (*rising up, as* FIGARO *sits down*): I appear on behalf of my old housekeeper, Marceline. This is the document on which my client founds her case. (*He reads*) "I, the undersigned, acknowledge to have received from Señora Marceline of the castle of Aguas Frescas the sum of two thousand piastres; and I agree to repay her this sum on demand, and to marry her."

FIGARO (*starting up*): No! You read it incorrectly. It should be: "or to marry her."

ALMAVIVA: Is it "or" or "and"? Let me see the

paper. (*He takes it and studies it intently.*) It is impossible to make out the word; there is a blot over it. (*He confers for a short time with the other judges.*) The verdict is that the defendant shall pay the plaintiff two thousand piastres at once, or marry her forthwith.

FIGARO: I will not marry her without the consent of my noble parents.

BARTHOLO: Ha, ha, ha! Your noble parents! You beggar's foundling!

FIGARO: If the fine lace and rich embroidery, and jewellery, which were found on me, are not sufficient to mark my noble birth, the precaution which was taken to tattoo me in a peculiar way shows how precious a child I was. Look at this hieroglyphic on my right arm.

[*He turns up his sleeve and shows* BARTHOLO *a spatula tattooed there.*

MARCELINE: Heavens, it's he—Emmanuel! Were you carried away by gipsies?

FIGARO: Yes, as I was playing near a great castle.

BARTHOLO (*pointing to* MARCELINE): Behold your mother!

MARCELINE (*pointing to* BARTHOLO): Behold your father!

FIGARO (*in a chap-fallen manner*): Oh, dear, dear, dear! I made sure I was of noble birth.

ALMAVIVA: Well, it's clear he can't marry her. (*To himself*) However shall I be able to stop Suzanne's wedding now?

SUZANNE (*running into the hall with a purse in her hand*): Stop! Stop! Do not marry her, Figaro. I can pay the debt at once with the dowry which my mistress has just given me.

[*She recoils, however, as she sees* FIGARO *with his arms around* MARCELINE, *kissing her.*

SUZANNE: Oh, you villain! Marry her at once then, since you are so fond of her.

FIGARO (*laughing*): I am fond of her, it is true; but I shall not marry her. Isn't she a dear creature?

SUZANNE: She is a fright, and you are a scoundrel. (*She begins to cry.*)

MARCELINE: Don't mind that tease, my little one. Come into my arms, and let me embrace both of you. I am Figaro's mother.

SUZANNE: His mother? Oh, then we can marry at once.

[*She runs to* MARCELINE *and clasps her in her arms.*

ACT IV

A gallery in the castle of Aguas Frescas adorned with flowers and garlands for the festival of the marriage of FIGARO *and* SUZANNE. *The bride and the bridegroom are talking together pending the arrival of the marriage guests.*

FIGARO (*with his arm round* SUZANNE'S *waist*): Well, my darling, aren't you content with the way things have turned out? My mother has brought the doctor round, and he is going to marry her at once.

SUZANNE: Who would have thought that my furious rival would suddenly be changed into the best and kindest of mothers?

FIGARO: Ah, my dear! Blind chance has done more for us than we could do ourselves. So it always happens. We plot, and plan, and work; but it is mere hazard that accomplishes everything. Yes, all of us—from the fierce conqueror who sweeps over the earth at the head of his armies, to the blind beggar who is led along by his dog—all of us are the playthings of chance. And the blind beggar with his dog is often better directed and clearer sighted than the victorious king blinded by pride and ambition. As for that blind creature that men call Love——

SUZANNE (*caressing him*): Ah, he is the only one who interests me!

FIGARO: I will be his faithful dog, and lead him straight to your door, my darling, and we three shall live happily together all our life.

SUZANNE: How happy we shall be! Your mother has given us a dowry, and so has the countess. If we could only get one from the count! I told him that I would meet him in the garden to-night. But what shall we do now that we can't dress Cherubino up in my clothes?

FIGARO: You must not meet him—that's certain. You promise me that, dear, don't you?

SUZANNE: Of course I do. There's only one man in the world that I love—my husband.

[*As* FIGARO *stoops to kiss her,* COUNTESS ROSINA *enters the gallery.*

ROSINA: Your friends are waiting outside to congratulate you, Figaro. Go and speak to them; I want to have a talk with Suzanne. [FIGARO *goes out.*

ROSINA: We cannot make use of Cherubino, after the frightful scene this morning. But I have another plan. Sit down, Suzanne, at the writing-table in the corner there, and write a letter for me.

SUZANNE (*going to the table*): Very well, madame.

ROSINA (*dictating*): "Do you still want to meet me in the garden to-night? I shall wait for you under the chestnut trees.—Suzanne."

SUZANNE: But I cannot! I cannot! It is too dangerous. I have promised Figaro not to.

ROSINA: There will be no danger. You will not go there. Can't you guess my plan? I will go there dressed up in your clothes, and you will wear mine, and play the part of the Countess Rosina for a time.

SUZANNE (*laughing and clapping her hands*): I won't tell Figaro. He will have a very bad quarter of an hour, until he discovers our new ruse.

ROSINA: Now you must give the letter to the count as soon as he enters the gallery. Here he is.

[*The lackeys have flung the folding doors wide open, and* COUNT ALMAVIVA, FIGARO, MARCELINE, *and* BARTHOLO *enter, followed by a procession of all the tenants on the estate, clad in holiday attire. The musicians strike up a merry air, and after crowding round the bride and bridegroom, and cheering them, the marriage-guests take up their positions for the dance.* COUNT ALMAVIVA *offers his arm to* SUZANNE, *and* COUNTESS ROSINA *goes up to* FIGARO. *But as he is about to take her arm,* MARCELINE *pulls his sleeve.*

MARCELINE (*in a whisper*): Look, my son! Suzanne and the count!

FIGARO: She has given him a letter. What can it mean?

ROSINA (*who has vainly tried to get in front of* FIGARO, *to prevent him seeing what has happened*): Come! You look as gloomy as if this were the funeral of the girl you loved instead of the celebration of your happy marriage with her.

FIGARO: Look how she is laughing! She does not seem to be annoyed by the attentions he is paying her. Still, I will trust in her. She is a good girl, and I am sure she loves me.

ACT V

FIGARO *is walking along the dark grove of chestnut-trees in the castle grounds of Aguas Frescas, and peering into the two pavilions built among the trees. He carries a lighted paper lantern, and his face is pale with anxiety.* BARTHOLO *and several friends are following him.*

BARTHOLO: What! You still think that Suzanne is carrying on with the count? Very well, we will wait here with you.

[*They conceal themselves, leaving* FIGARO *alone.*

FIGARO: Oh, woman, woman! What a weak creature you are! But no, Count Almaviva, you shall not have her! You are a great lord. But what have you done to earn your high rank, your immense wealth, your great power? You have taken the trouble to be born—nothing more. For the rest, you are just an ordinary mediocre creature. Why, merely in order to live, I have to use more knowledge and talent than men of your sort have shown for the last hundred years in governing the Spanish Empire. And now—now you think you are going to trick me! Oh, Suzanne, Suzanne! But here she comes.

[*He gets behind the tree, and* SUZANNE *and* COUNTESS ROSINA *enter.* SUZANNE *is dressed in the* COUNTESS'S *attire, and the* COUNTESS *is wearing* SUZANNE'S *bridal dress.*

COUNTESS ROSINA (*in a whisper*): My husband has been following me for ten minutes.

[*Just as she does the* COUNT *arrives, and* FIGARO *sees him.*

ALMAVIVA (*going up to* ROSINA, *whom he takes for* SUZANNE, *and kissing her*): Ah, my dear! How soft and fine your skin is! Even the countess's is not smoother or lovelier.

ROSINA (*imitating the voice of* SUZANNE): The countess's! Don't you love her any longer?

ALMAVIVA: Oh, yes, I still love her! My wife is admirable, but——

ROSINA: Too respectable, eh?

ALMAVIVA (*kissing her again, and giving her a bag of gold, and putting a diamond ring on her finger*): Yes, I suppose that's it. All the delightful anxieties of love are ended by marriage. But what a wild dance you

led me! Here is the dowry I promised you, and a little gift besides.

ROSINA (*with a curtsey*): You are very kind to Suzanne.

FIGARO (*in an aside*): This is going too far.

SUZANNE (*also in an aside*): Good! She has got me a dowry.

ALMAVIVA: Now let us enter this little pavilion.

FIGARO (*rushing out, mad with anger*): No, you don't, my lord!

ALMAVIVA: It is Figaro! [*He runs away, and his wife hides behind the pavilion.*

FIGARO: Where has Suzanne got to? [*In turning round he sees* SUZANNE, *and takes her for the* COUNTESS) Oh, madame, your husband is running off with my wife! She is in that pavilion, and he is with her. I will call my friends, and expose them both. [*He opens his mouth to cry out, and* SUZANNE *forgets the part she is playing, and speaks in her natural voice.*

SUZANNE: Don't be silly.

FIGARO: Suzanne! Ah, I see! You have carried out my old plan in a different way. Look! There is Count Almaviva watching us. He mistakes you for his wife. Now for a pretty vengeance. [FIGARO *puts his arm around* SUZANNE'S *waist, and leads her towards the pavilion.*

ALMAVIVA: Rosina with a strange man! Ah, that letter I received this morning! [*He springs forward and seizes* FIGARO, *while* SUZANNE *enters the pavilion hastily, and shuts the door.*

ALMAVIVA: Figaro! What are you doing with my wife?

FIGARO: What were you doing with mine?

ALMAVIVA (*beside himself with anger*): Oh, if I had my sword! Where are all my servants? Hola, hola! Come here, all of you, all of you!

[*In answer to his cries the guests crowd into the chestnut-grove.* ALMAVIVA *forces open the door of the pavilion, and drags* SUZANNE *out. As she keeps her face covered with her hands, he still takes her for the* COUNTESS.

ALMAVIVA: All your efforts are useless. You have disgraced me publicly with one of my own servants. I will avenge myself publicly!

[SUZANNE *throws herself at his feet, and* FIGARO *pretends to be overcome with fear and shame. In the meantime,* COUNTESS ROSINA, *still dressed in her maid's bridal attire, has crept out from behind the pavilion, and, covering her face with her hands to conceal her merriment, is enjoying the strange scene.*

SUZANNE (*imitating the* COUNTESS'S *voice*): Pardon, Pardon!

ALMAVIVA: There can be no pardon!

ROSINA (*showing herself clearly*): Have you gone so far as to marry Suzanne, then?

[COUNT ALMAVIVA *looks at the two women in astonishment. They begin to laugh.* FIGARO *roars outright, and gradually all the spectators' faces break out into smiles, for the grove is now brilliantly lighted up by hundreds of torches.*

ALMAVIVA: What a lesson! No more intrigues for me! In these matters the cleverest of men is a mere child compared with a woman.

ROSINA (*laughing*): Don't regret the lesson. A day such as this is just the thing to give a 'prentice ambassador an inkling into the arts of political intrigue. We will divide the spoil. *She gives the bag of gold to* FIGARO *and the diamond-ring to* SUZANNE.) And now we will go on with the festival.

[*They all dance merrily, and* FIGARO, *finding a guitar, sings, as they whirl around him:*

Men are made by chance of birth,
  One a king, and one a clown;
Rank is not the best of worth,
  Titles do not bring renown.

Only inborn genius can
  True nobility impart.
Many a clown's a kingly man,
  Many a king's a clown at heart.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER

Philaster, or Love Lies A-bleeding

Persons in the Drama

KING of Sicily and Calabria
PHILASTER, *heir to the throne*
PHARAMOND, *Prince of Spain*
ARETHUSA, *daughter of the king*
DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, *lords*
A COUNTRY FELLOW
BELLARIO, *Philaster's page*
MEGRA, *a court lady*
ATTENDANTS
CITIZENS

ACT I

SCENE I.—*The Presence Chamber.* DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE.

DION: Sirs, we are here about the Spanish prince that's come to marry our kingdom's heir and be our sovereign.

THRASILINE: Many say she looks not on him like a maid in love.

Francis Beaumont was born in Leicestershire in 1584; John Fletcher was born at Rye in December, 1579. Beaumont, the son of a justice of the Common Pleas, was intended for the Bar, but the law had as little fascination for him as the Church held for Fletcher, the son of that Bishop of Peterborough who played a large part in the death of Mary Stuart, and who died as the result of chagrin at Queen Elizabeth's displeasure, and also, the chroniclers say, of an immoderate use of tobacco. The friendship of the two was one of singular warmth and beauty. They shared the same household, and had board and bed and everything else in common. Thus they lived and wrote together till Beaumont's marriage in 1613, an event followed by his death on March 6, 1616. Fletcher continued writing until he died of

CLEREMONT: Sir, it is thought, with her he shall enjoy both these kingdoms of Sicily and Calabria.

DION: Yet is the right heir to one of them living, and virtuously: the people admiring the bravery of his mind and lamenting his injuries.

CLEREMONT: Who—Philaster?

DION: Yes; whose father was by our late King of Calabria unrighteously deposed from his fruitful Sicily. Yet is he suffered free liberty, the king fearing the people.

[*Enter* KING, PHARAMOND, ARETHUSA, *and* ATTENDANTS.

KING: We have drawn you hither, worthy sir,
To make your fair endearments to our daughter,
And worthy services, known to our subjects,
Now loved and wondered at; next, our intent
To plant you deeply our immediate heir
Both to our blood and kingdoms; and to confirm
The nobles and the gentry of these kingdoms
By oath to your succession.

DION (*aside*): Well, we shall see.

PHARAMOND: Kissing your white hand, mistress, I take leave
To thank your royal father.

[*Enter* PHILASTER, *who kneels to the* KING.

PHILASTER: Right noble sir, as low as my obedience,
And with a heart as loyal as my knee,
I beg your favour.

KING: Rise; speak your intents.

DION: Mark but the king, how pale he looks, he fears.

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the plague in August, 1625. Their collected works include more than forty plays, pastorals, and masques. "Philaster," the first fruit of their collaboration, was probably produced in 1608, and is generally supposed to be in the main the work of Beaumont. The plot calls for no preliminary explanation; it turns chiefly on the favourite Elizabethan expedient of a girl passing for a boy without awakening suspicion. The scene is laid in Messina.

PHILASTER: Then thus I turn
My language to you, prince: you, foreign man!
Endure me, for you must. This earth you tread upon,
By my dead father was not left
To your inheritance, and I up and living.
When thou art king, look I be dead and rotten,
And my name ashes; for this very ground
My father's friends made fertile with their faiths,
Before that day of shame shall gape and swallow
Thee and thy nation.

PHARAMOND: He's mad; beyond cure, mad! mad!

KING: You are too bold.

PHARAMOND: No, sir, I am too tame.

KING: Go to, be better tempered. Sure, he's possessed.

PHILASTER: Yes, with my father's spirit. He tells me, king,
I was a king's heir, bids me be a king,
And whispers to me these are all my subjects.

KING: Go to; for this time
I pardon your wild speech, without so much
As your imprisonment.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—ARETHUSA'S *apartment. She has sent for* PHILASTER, *to reveal her love for him, which he returns with ardour.*

ARETHUSA: Our love will be the nobler and the better blest
In that the secret justice of the gods
Is mingled with it. How shall we desire
To hold intelligence?

PHILASTER: I have a boy
Not yet seen in the court. His parents dead,
I found him sitting by a fountain's side;
And such a pretty, helpless innocence
Dwelt in his face, I gladly entertained

Him, who was glad to follow; and have got
The trustiest, loving'st, and the gentlest boy
That ever master kept. Him I will send
To wait on you, and bear our hidden love.

Act II

Scene I.—Philaster's *apartment.* Philaster, Bellario.

Philaster: She is a princess I prefer thee to.
Bellario: In that small time that I have seen the world,
I never knew a man hasty to part with
A servant he thought trusty.
Philaster: Gentle boy;
I find no fault at all in thy behaviour.
Thy love doth plead so prettily to stay
That, trust me, I could weep to part with thee.
Alas, I do not turn thee off! Thou know'st
That when thou art with her, thou dwell'st with me.
Nay, weep not, gentle boy. 'Tis more than time
Thou did'st attend the princess.
Bellario: I am gone.
Heaven bless your loves, your fights, all your designs.
[*Exit.*

Scene II.—Pharamond *embarks on an intrigue with* Megra, *which is reported secretly to* Arethusa.

Scene III.—Arethusa's *apartment.* Arethusa. *Enter* Bellario.

Arethusa: Sir, you are sad to change your service; is't not so?
Bellario: Madam, I have not changed; I wait on you
To do him service.
Arethusa: Come, sir, tell me truly.
Does your lord love me?

BELLARIO: If it be love
To forget all respect of his own friends
In thinking of your face; if it be love
To sit cross-armed and sigh away the day;
If it be love to weep himself away
When he but hears of any lady dead
Or killed, because it might have been your chance;
If, when he goes to rest (which will not be)
'Twixt every prayer he says, to name you once,
As others drop a bead, be to be in love,
Then, madam, I dare swear he loves you.

ARETHUSA: Oh, you're a cunning boy, and taught to lie
For your lord's credit! But thou know'st a lie
That bears this sound is welcomer to me
Than any truth that says he loves me not.

SCENE IV.—*Before* PHARAMOND'S *lodging.* ARETHUSA *has informed the* KING *of the intrigue between* PHARAMOND *and* MEGRA, *hoping that this will lead to the rejection of* PHARAMOND'S *suit.* MEGRA, *however, meets detection defiantly, declaring that she will proclaim abroad the guilty relations which she says exist between* ARETHUSA *and* BELLARIO. *The* KING *is silenced, but the threat is made in the presence of* DION *and the other lords who favour* PHILASTER.

ACT III

SCENE I.—*Court of the palace.* DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE.

CLEREMONT: Nay, doubtless, 'tis true.

DION: Ay, and 'tis the gods
That raised this punishment, to scourge the king
With his own issue.

CLEREMONT: Philaster is too backward.

DION: The only cause that draws Philaster back
From this attempt is the fair princess's love,
Which he admires, and we can now confute.
Since it is true and tends to his own good,
I'll make this new report to be my knowledge.
[*Enter* PHILASTER.

PHILASTER: My worthy friends, what service may I do
Worthy your acceptation?

DION: My good lord,
We come to urge that virtue, which we know
Lives in your breast, forth. Rise, and make a head;
The nobles and the people all are dulled
With this usurping king.
You know the people have long hated him;
And now the princess whom they loved, is loathed
No less, being known a wanton.

PHILASTER: Thou liest (*drawing*)
And thou shalt feel it. Thus to rob a lady
Of her good name is an infectious sin
Not to be pardoned.

DION: But this, my lord, is truth.

PHILASTER: Oh, say not so.
What friend bears a sword
To run me through!

DION: My lord, recall yourself.
And think what's best to do.

PHILASTER: Please you to leave me.
To-morrow I will give you answer. [*Exeunt* LORDS.

[BELLARIO *enters.* PHILASTER *questions him of* ARETHUSA'S *kindness to him, till* BELLARIO *indignantly repudiates the charge suggested, unmoved by threats of death.*

PHILASTER: Oh, but thou dost not know
What 'tis to die.

BELLARIO: Yes, I do know, my lord.
'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep;
A quiet resting from all jealousy,

A thing we all pursue; I know besides
It is but giving over of a game
That must be lost.

[PHILASTER *is disarmed by* BELLARIO'S *fearless innocence, though still believing* DION'S *story. He dismisses the boy from his sight for ever, to* BELLARIO'S *anguish.*

SCENE II.—ARETHUSA'S *apartment.* PHILASTER *enters and finds her weeping; the* KING *has bidden her to have done with* BELLARIO. *"There be foul whispers stirring. Cast him off, and suddenly." Her tears seem a confirmation to* PHILASTER; *he bids her "let the boy go."*

ARETHUSA: Oh, cruel!
Are you hard-hearted too? Who shall now tell you
How much I loved you? Who shall swear it to you,
And weep the tears I send? Who shall take up his lute,
And touch it till he crown a silent sleep
Upon my eyelids, making me dream and cry,
"Oh, my dear, dear Philaster"?
PHILASTER: Oh, my heart!
Would he had broken thee that made me know
This lady was not loyal.
[*He bursts into a passion of reproaches, and leaves her.*

ACT IV

SCENES I. *and* II.—ARETHUSA *has escaped from the hunting party, her riderless horse has been caught, and the company has dispersed through the forest in search of the princess.* BELLARIO *is also wandering in the forest.*

SCENE III.—*The forest.* BELLARIO *finds* ARETHUSA *swooning. She revives. Enter* PHILASTER.

PHILASTER: I am to blame to be so much in rage;
I'll tell her coolly when and where I heard

This killing truth. I will be temperate—
Oh monstrous! Tempt me not, ye gods! Good gods,
Tempt not a frail man. What's he that has a heart
But he must ease it here! What, before my face?
Poison of asps between your lips. I have done.
Dear Arethusa, do but take this sword.
I prithee kill me—Wilt thou, Bellario?
You will not kill me?
BELLARIO: Not for a world.
PHILASTER: Begone;
I blame thee not, Bellario; this is the last
Of all our meetings. (*Exit* BELLARIO.) Are you at peace?
ARETHUSA: With heaven and earth.
PHILASTER: May they divide thy soul and body.
[*As he wounds her, a* COUNTRY FELLOW *enters, who endeavours to shield* ARETHUSA. *Exit* PHILASTER, *leaving* COUNTRY FELLOW *wounded.*

SCENE IV.—*Another part of the forest.* BELLARIO *asleep:* PHILASTER *finds him, and wounds him slightly, meaning to escape himself and let* BELLARIO *be taken.*

PHILASTER: I have caught myself.
The loss of blood hath stayed my flight. Here, here,
Is he that struck thee.
BELLARIO: Fly, and save yourself.
PHILASTER: Art thou then true to me?
[PHILASTER *creeps into the bushes. Enter* PHARAMOND *and* NOBLES.
CLEREMONT: Yonder, my lord, see—
DION: This is he, my lord,
Upon my soul, that hurt her; 'tis the boy,
That wicked boy, that served her.
BELLARIO: I confess I set upon her.
[PHILASTER *comes forward.*
PHILASTER: Turn back, you ravishers of innocence.

Not all the wealth of Tagus can weigh down
That virtue. It was I that hurt the princess.
BELLARIO: Alas, he's mad.
PHILASTER: By all the oaths that men ought most to keep,
He touched her not: by all that's good, 'twas I;
You know she stood betwixt me and my right.
[*Enter* KING, ARETHUSA, *and guard.*
KING: Is the villain ta'en?
PHARAMOND: Here's two confess the deed,
But 'twas Philaster.
PHILASTER: Question it no more.
KING: Bear them to prison.
ARETHUSA: Grant me
Their custodies, and that I may appoint
Their tortures and their deaths.
KING: 'Tis granted.

ACT V

SCENE I.—*A prison.* PHILASTER, BELLARIO, ARETHUSA.

PHILASTER: Oh, Arethusa, oh, Bellario,
Leave, to be kind. I am a man
False to a pair of the most trusty ones
That ever earth bore. Can it bear us all?
ARETHUSA: My dear lord, say not so.
BELLARIO: Lament no more. 'Tis as it should be.

SCENE II.—*A state-room.* KING, DION, *and* NOBLES.

KING: Is the princess ready
To bring her prisoners out? Tell her we stay.
[*Enter* ARETHUSA, PHILASTER, *and* BELLARIO *as Hymen in a robe and garland.*
How now? What masque is this?
ARETHUSA: Sir, in plain truth,
This prisoner that you gave me is become
My keeper and dear husband.

KING: Your dear husband?
Call in the captain of the citadel;
There shall you keep your wedding; o'er your necks
An axe shall hang like a prodigious meteor
Ready to crop your love's sweets.
PHILASTER: If you aim
At the dear life of this sweet innocent,
Your memory shall be as foul behind you
As you are living. [*Enter* GENTLEMAN.
GENTLEMAN: Get you to your strength,
And rescue the Prince Pharamond from danger.
He's ta'en prisoner by the citizens.
Led by an old grey ruffian, who comes on
In rescue of the Lord Philaster.

SCENE III.—*The* KING, *terrified by the fury of the populace, has appealed to* PHILASTER *to save him, as no one else can check the mob, who are bringing the panic-stricken* PHARAMOND *to the palace.* PHILASTER *satisfies the mob, who, on promise of pardon, hand over their prisoner to him.*

SCENE IV.—*The palace. All the characters are assembled, and the reconciliation between the* KING *and* PHILASTER *is completed. But* MEGRA *now denounces* ARETHUSA *and* BELLARIO. *The* KING *threatens* BELLARIO *with torture, to extort the truth.*

BELLARIO: Great king, if you command
This lord to talk with me alone, my tongue
Shall utter all.
KING: Well, walk aside with him.
BELLARIO (*apart, to* DION): Know you this face, my lord? You have a daughter.
DION: Oh my shame! Is it possible? Draw near
That I may gaze upon thee.
All is discovered! It is a woman.
BELLARIO: I am his daughter.

PHILASTER: The gods are just.
But why didst thou conceal thy sex, Bellario?
BELLARIO: My lord, I saw and loved you. Yet I knew
My wits no match for you, so was past hope
Of having you. But could I but have lived
In presence of you, I had had my end.
Therefore, I dressed myself even as you found me
In habit of a boy; and made a vow
By all the most religious things a maid
Could call together, never to be known,
Whilst there was hope to hide me from men's eyes.
But if I may have leave to serve the princess,
To see the virtues of her lord and her,
I shall have hope to live.
KING: Enjoy, Philaster,
This kingdom which is yours; and after me
Whatever I call mine. Let princes learn
By this to rule the passion of their blood;
For what Heaven wills can never be withstood.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Aurora Leigh

I.—A Poet's Girlhood

I WHO have written much in prose and verse
For others' uses, will now write for mine—
Will write my story for my better self.
I, writing thus, am still what men call young.
I write. My mother was a Florentine,
Whose rare blue eyes were shut from seeing me
When scarcely I was four years old.
My father was an austere Englishman;
Her face flashed like a cymbal in his face,
Transfiguring him to music; thus he loved,
And thus beloved she died.
Father and child,
We lived among the mountains many years.
My father taught me what he had learnt the best
Before he died and left me—grief and love;
And, out of books, the ignorance of men.

Elizabeth Barrett, born at Durham on March 6, 1806, was an invalid for many years, and solaced herself by a wide range of reading and study, and by writing poetry, which brought her celebrity when the "Cry of the Children" appeared. In 1846 the poet, Robert Browning, met her; in spite of opposition the invalid effected a runaway marriage with her lover in 1847. The fourteen years of their wedded life—she died at Florence on June 30, 1861—demonstrated that genius is compatible with intense domestic felicity. Mrs. Browning's "Sonnets from the Portuguese" stand with the most exquisite love-poetry in our language. Many of her poems are the expression of her devotion to the cause of Italian liberty. "Aurora Leigh," published in 1856, was written at Florence, and was regarded by Mrs. Browning as "the most mature of my works, and one in which my highest convictions of work and art have appeared." Practically, it is a novel in blank verse, and at the same time it contains the outpourings of the writer's convictions regarding human life generally, and art and woman's share in art in particular. To convey the story in brief by means of actual passages from the poem is impracticable; but the spirit and the forms of expression have been followed as closely as possible in this prose summary.

When I was thirteen years of age he died, and I was sent for to England, to his sister, who led a colourless, conventional, virtuous existence.

> She had lived a life which was not life at all,
> A sort of cage-bird life, born in a cage;
> And I, alas, a wild bird scarcely fledged.

I lived the life she made for me, and her cousin Romney Leigh would visit us.

> Always Romney Leigh
> Was looking for the worms, I for the gods.
> A god-like nature his; the gods look down,
> Incurious of themselves; and in those days
> I was a worm, too; and he looked on me.

The life did not kill me. I became alive to the delight of nature in England—for we lived in the country; and then I discovered the world of books—not hers, but my father's—stowed away in a garret. I devoured them without guidance. At last I lighted on the poets,

> the only truth-tellers now left to God,

and they possessed me. I was one with them; the poet's ecstasy gripped me. I wrote

> mere lifeless imitation of live verse,—

no doubt, unreal, but real to me.

My soul at least expanded, though the process seemed to awaken puzzled anxiety in my aunt. And in my walks with Romney Leigh and his artist friend, Vincent Carrington, he would bear with me,

> in melancholy patience, not unkind,

when I would

> Bid him mark, that howsoe'er the world
> Went ill, as he related, certainly
> The thrushes still sang in it.

One morning, when I was nearly twenty,

> And looked before and after, as I stood,
> Woman and artist—either incomplete,
> Both credulous of completion,

I ran out, and began to gather myself a garland of ivy, when Romney Leigh stood beside me. I was caught, as it seemed to him,

> Not too much
> Witch, scholar, poet, dreamer, and the rest,
> To be a woman also.

We fell into argument. He would have it that in this hard-pressed world there is no time for the mere play which woman's poetizing must be. Women cannot think of the world's needs in the mass; only of the individual grief. For himself, duty calls him to the struggle, to bring some practical help to a world out of joint. Would I give him the help a woman can—love, life in fellowship through bitter duties—be his wife?

I answered him: "You love not a woman, but a cause. I am unworthy of the cause, and your idea of love is not mine. You want, not a wife, but a sister of charity." "You want me to say, not love me and work with me, but love me or I die?" "Unjust! You treat woman merely as man's complement; but I have my own vocation. We may be fit only to aspire, not to create; but I will not surrender my aspiration."

Having thus dismissed him, my aunt had her reproaches: "Because my mother was an Italian, all the Leigh property passed to Romney, none to me. Our parents had designed this marriage to right whatever of wrong there was; and would I reject a good man's love for a fancy? I should be penniless but for the tiny sum at her own disposal." But this only fixed my determination. I would not marry him to escape my own struggle for life. It was but a short time later when she died. In her hands was an unopened letter. From Romney himself I learned that this contained a deed of gift from him, conveying a large sum of money to her, which was now mine as her personal legatee. But I would take no gift from him, however he might try to veil the fact that it was his gift. I tore up the

deed before his eyes, and we went our several ways—he to his social problems, I to London to prove my artistry.

II.—Romney Leigh's Bridal

I now became successful; that is, I won recognition from others,—from myself mainly a consciousness of the gap between endeavour and achievement. I won some fame; so, too, in his way of startling social experiments, did Romney. I made my bread by literary hack-work, so as to win some time for the work which I do for its own sake and mine.

One day I received a caller, Lady Waldemar, on a delicate mission. I was Romney Leigh's cousin? Well, she would own that—she loved Romney. "But he is inhuman in his monstrous idealism. Now he is on the point of marrying a woman from the gutter, to show the iniquity of social classes. If you do not starve or sin, you're nothing to him. I have struggled to please him, in vain. But this marriage is to be next week. I want you to see Marian Erle, then you can persuade him to break it off—not for your sake or mine, but for posterity's." I would have nothing to do with her scheme, and we parted almost in open hostility.

But I went to see this Marian Erle in the horrible slum where she lived, and found her, not beautiful, but a marvel of unsullied womanhood. She told me her story—how she was born an outcast, the daughter of a drunken drover, who beat his wife, who passed on the blows to the child. Without parental love, she drew for herself a religion of love from the blue sky. She was sent to a Sunday-school by a lady, met with stray kindnesses from casual passers-by, picked up odds and ends of books tossed to her by pedlars. Then came a ghastly day, when her mother tried to sell her. Then she fled, was picked up in a faint and carried to a hospital. There Romney found her, saved her, got her work as a

seamstress; and then became only a sublime memory to her. But she had lost her situation by going to take care of a fellow-worker dying of consumption, beside whose death-bed she met Romney again; and he had bidden her to become his wife. Her love for him was not a passion, but an adoration. For him she was what his cause needed.

> Loves me! he loves all—
> And me, of course. He had not asked me else
> To work with him for ever and be his wife.

Even while we talked Romney entered—our first meeting since the time of my aunt's death. I spoke in praise of Marian, as altogether worthy to become one of the ladies of the house of Leigh. Would he let her be married from my house? No; she was to come to him straight from the people.

The wedding-day was a month later. Why had I not warned Romney against Lady Waldemar? He thought her good; I knew her false.

The day came. Society was bidden to the wedding, notably Lady Waldemar and the excellent Lord Howe; so was half St. Giles, the dregs of London. There was a feast to follow, so they came. Society waited and talked, for the most part mocking at Romney's crazes or whispering scandals. The bridegroom came, but no bride, and still no bride when the time was passed by half an hour. Then there was a messenger for Romney. He stood up and announced that there would be no wedding. Only the summoning of the police prevented a hideous riot in the church.

The message was a letter from Marian, a heart-broken farewell. "She had tried to tell him, but could not. And Lady Waldemar had been so kind and so wise, and I had been kindest. But she could not marry him without harming him. He was not to look for her; a generous friend could take care of her."

What did it mean—that she had left him for another

lover; or to avoid doing him hurt, instigated by some smooth, perfidious tongue? Lady Waldemar came into my mind. He learnt that she had had one other visitor, a woman, clearly of a certain nameless class. Had she dragged the girl down? Yet I, at least, was sure that whatever befel, Marian was pure. I gave him such comfort as I could. And so we parted, he, as I feel still, in those chill heights of rectitude where poetry and poetesses are insignificant trifles.

I do not love him; why do I, then, find it troubles me so that I cannot move him? Is that personal element a condition of woman's success? Ballads and pastorals —I succeed with these, but the very success is failure. What is done in art for the sake of applause, no matter whose, must be deficient. What I do is praised, and with all the praise, my own soul cries, "Is this all? All that's done?" And, for a woman, this solitude is intolerable; the love of all—yes; but we also need the personal love of some one for ourselves, not only for what we do. If I envy my fellows, it is not for their powers or their fame, but because there is someone who loves them, wife, mother: I am alone.

III.—Lost and Found

Nearly two years have gone since that disaster. I have been to-night at Lord Howe's. Lady Waldemar was there—very beautiful. I heard the talk between Sir Blaise Delorme, type of the mediævalist High Church aristocrat, and a socialistic young gentleman who calls Romney "our ablest man," but regards him as somewhat behind the times in calling himself a Christian; the latter in particular philosophised over the report that Romney would shortly marry Lady Waldemar, who is certainly his disciple. Lord Howe came to me—an ambassador from a wealthy wooer—to urge the benefit to my art from such a marriage. That being over, we

passed Lady Waldemar, from whom he rescued me. How she can wound with delicate needle-pricks! Why should it pain me that he who would have married me, and then Marian Erle, should now give his love to Lady Waldemar? I will write her congratulations and good wishes. And now I am going to Italy. . . .

In "fair fantastic Paris" the crowds are good for meditation. I walked amidst them,

> Musing with myself
> On life and art—

when I saw a face, the face of our lost Marian Erle; I darted after it, lost it, could not find it again. It must have been Marian, but—there was a babe in her arms. I cannot tell Romney that; but I must find her.

Searching did not find her, but sheer accident. In the Market of Flowers we came face to face. I caught her, would not let her go, besought her to come home, home to me. She yielded to the appeal for Romney's sake, to hear of him; but it was to her home we went, not mine. There was her babe, a lovely child over which she hung in a passion of love. But when she understood what I had in my mind, it wrung from her first a protestation of innocence which vanquished me, and then her full, terrible tale of wrong.

She had adored Romney. And then she had begun to see how she

> Still did most mischief when she meant most love.

She had felt it through Lady Waldemar. Every visit Lady Waldemar paid her—and they were many more than Romney knew—made her realise more clearly the wrong she would do to Romney in marrying him. I could see the subtle treachery with which the woman instilled unsuspected poison; the woman who was, perhaps, even now being wedded to him.

Finally, she had promised to send Marian to Australia in the care of her own waiting-maid, who was going

there. So she had written the letter to Romney, and gone away with the woman, herself in a stupor of grief. In France she had been taken to a horrible house, and drugged, and made a victim. For a time she had been crazed; recovered, and found a seamstress who gave her work; and so she had supported the child and herself.

Having told me all, she no longer refused to trust herself and her babe to me. But I cannot tell Romney the truth about the woman who is now no doubt his wife. I wrote to Lord Howe, and told him the story; to be told to Romney if he had not yet married Lady Waldemar, but otherwise to be kept from him; except the one fact that Marian was found. To Lady Waldemar I wrote denunciation and warning that her secret would be kept so long as she failed in no point of her wifely duty to Romney—and no longer.

IV.—Darkness and Dawn

I had come back to the Italy of my childhood, with its reminiscences and its graves. But in truth, with Marian and the babe, I was in a perfect solitude, a simple spectator of fair sights and sounds; disinclined above all even to risk meeting known faces. Then one evening, as I sat on my terrace,

> The heavens were making room to hold the night,
> The sevenfold heavens unfolding all their gates,
> To let the stars out slowly,

I was suddenly aware that he was before me—Romney. I spoke:

> "You are come,
> My cousin Romney? This is wonderful.
> But all is wonder on such summer nights;
> And nothing should surprise us any more,
> Who see that miracle of stars. Behold!"
> "Then you do not know,"
> He murmured. "Yes, I know," I said, "I know."
> "Then you never had Lord Howe's letter?
> It would have made things smoother."
> "No."

This was the man who had married Lady Waldemar. There was a stately sadness in his tone and speech as of one who sought sympathy. What sympathy could I give? He asked of Marian; then spoke of my book.

> It is in my heart,
> Lives in me, wakes in me, and dreams in me.

I reminded him of that long ago June when he had spoken far otherwise. He answered me that I had been right that day, not he; I had warned him that his materialistic plans must fail, lacking the life of poetic, of spiritual, conception. I had been right. He had failed. I, too, had failed, I said. But for both there are two essential truths. Our failure is not God's failure, and yet our effort is precious, not to be foregone. But I had never heard how utterly his great philanthropic schemes had come to nought; how the folk of his own neighbourhood had been set against him; how finally Leigh Hall, the home, the phalanstery he had established in his ancestral house, had been burnt to the ground. He had himself been brought to the point of death. And yet I felt

> A woman stood between his soul and mine.

And he went on to speak of her—the wife to whom he owed amends; whom having by his side, he must say farewell to me. "Too true," I said. "I could not come from Marian to clasp the hand of Lady Waldemar."

"Lady Waldemar? She? You dream that I am wedded to her? Now it is indeed my turn to forgive! Read here her letter for you."

She repudiated my charge, declaring herself innocent of what her maid had done, hinted charges against Marian. Romney had come with Lord Howe to say he was going to Florence to marry Marian. The rest of the letter was vitriol—aimed at me.

Dazed, I said, "Not married!" "Yes, married to Marian Erle." But Marian herself was at our side.

She challenged us both: could he in very deed take her and the child for his honoured wife and his own son? And would I suffer him to do so? He would, and would hold her in perfect honour; I would, and would hold that there was no wrong to him, since she was utterly worthy. Then it was her turn. She would not. What she felt for him was not that wifely love which warrants marriage, but adoration of another sort. Nor could she bear children which would place this one child of hers in a false relation. And with that she fled.

It was then I learned that he loved me. He spoke as one who knew I did not love him—not seeking to win my love. And beside that he thought I had learned that he had been blinded by the fire at Leigh Hall. And then it was my bliss to tell him what I had known, but would not confess even to myself, that I loved him utterly and would not let him go. And so together, he with his fleshly eyes blinded, but both with one vision in our souls, we faced the eastward dawning of a new Day.

ROBERT BROWNING

A Blot in the 'Scutcheon

Persons in the Drama

LORD MERTOUN THOROLD, LORD TRESHAM
AUSTIN, *Tresham's brother*
GERARD, *the Warrener*. . . . . .MILDRED TRESHAM
GUENDOLEN TRESHAM, *a cousin betrothed to* AUSTIN
RETAINERS.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*A saloon in* TRESHAM'S *mansion.*
TRESHAM, MERTOUN, AUSTIN, GUENDOLEN.

TRESHAM: I welcome you, Lord Mertoun, yet once more,
To this ancestral roof of mine. Your name,
Noble among the noblest, in itself
Would win you welcome!
MERTOUN: I thank you; who am come
With bare leave to ask a gift. That I dare ask

Robert Browning, born at Camberwell, London, on May 7, 1812, was descended on his father's side from an old Dorsetshire family, and on his mother's from a German who had settled in Dundee, and had married a Scottish wife. In childhood, the poet was intended to follow in the footsteps of his father, who was employed in the Bank of England, but a strong poetic temperament had manifested itself, and before he was twelve years of age, he had completed a volume of poems. His first published work was "Pauline," which appeared in 1833. He continued to publish dramas and poems, his favorite form being the dramatic monologue, either lyrical or in blank verse, of which the most remarkable example is the series forming the "Ring and the Book," published in 1869, and generally accepted as Browning's masterpiece. In 1846 he married Elizabeth Barrett Browning (see *ante*), whom he survived

Firmly, near boldly, near with confidence
That gift, I have to thank you. Yes, Lord Tresham,
I love your sister—as you'd have one love
That lady . . oh, more, more, I love her.
Grant me that lady, and . . . .
GUENDOLEN: Why, this is loving, Austin!
That's true love!
Ours must begin again.
MERTOUN: You grant my suit?
I have your word if hers?
TRESHAM: My best of words
If hers encourage you. I trust it will.
Have you seen Lady Mildred, by the way?
MERTOUN: I . . I . . our two demesnes, remember, touch—
I have been used to wander carelessly
After my stricken game: I have come upon
The lady's wondrous beauty unaware,
And—and then . . . I have seen her.
TRESHAM: What's to say
May be said briefly. She has never known
A mother's care; I stand for father too.
Her beauty is not strange to you, it seems—
You cannot know the good and tender heart,

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thirty-eight years—his own death occurring on December 12, 1889. "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon" appeared in 1843, when it was produced by Macready as manager of the Drury Lane, the leading parts being taken by Phelps and Helen Faucit, the Lady Carlisle of "Strafford." As with "Strafford," it could not be said that the play, as an acting play, was a success. It is not, in fact, easy to name English tragedies, other than Shakespeare's, which have been able to hold the stage permanently, and none of Browning's have done so. But as dramatic poems they hold an assured place in the world's literature. The story of "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon" hardly demands elucidation. Mildred and Mertoun, the boy and girl heroine and hero, have met and loved, unknown to Mildred's brother, a man to whom the stainlessness of the family 'scutcheon is a passion. The lover seeks his lady's hand in marriage, when the discovery of the past brings about tragedy.

Its girl's trust and its woman's constancy,
How pure yet passionate, how reserved yet free,
How—one might know I talked of Mildred—thus
We brothers talk.

MERTOUN: Then . . . when shall . . . you will crown
Your goodness by forthwith appraising me
When . . . if . . . the lady will appoint a day
For me to wait on you—and her. [*Exit.*

TRESHAM: Now, voices! voices! 'St; the lady's first!
The earl: How seems he—seems he not—

GUENDOLEN: He's young.

TRESHAM: The earl: How seems he—seems he not—
All three of us; she's in the library.
You, golden creature, will help us all?

GUENDOLEN: Austin, now we must—

TRESHAM: Must what? Must speak truth,
Malignant tongue! Detect one fault in him!
I challenge you!

GUENDOLEN: Witchcraft's a fault in him,
For you're bewitched!

SCENE II.—MILDRED'S *chamber.* MILDRED *and* GUENDOLEN, *who has been affectionately teasing her cousin.*

GUENDOLEN: Mildred, the earl has soft blue eyes!

MILDRED: My brother—
Did he—you said that he received him well?

GUENDOLEN: If I said only "well" I said not much—
Oh, stay—which brother?

MILDRED: Thorold—who, who else?

GUENDOLEN: Thorold's too proud; too proud with brooding o'er
The light of his interminable line,
An ancestry with men all Paladins,
And women all—

MILDRED: Dear Guendolen, 'tis late,
And I would rest.
GUENDOLEN: Good-night and rest to you.
I said how gracefully his mantle lay
Beneath the rings of his light hair?
MILDRED: Brown hair!
GUENDOLEN: Brown? Why, it *is* brown.
How could you know that?
MILDRED: How? did not you—Oh, Austin 'twas declared
His hair was light, not brown—my head!
Good-night.
GUENDOLEN: Forgive me—sleep the soundlier for me.
[*Exit.*
MILDRED: My heart! I shall not reach the window. Needs
Must I have sinned much, so to suffer! There
(*She places a lamp before the purple pane in the window.*)
Mildred and Mertoun! Mildred, with consent
Of all the world and Thorold, Mertoun's bride!
Too late! 'Tis sweet to think of; but I know
It comes too late, 'twill sweetest be of all
To dream my soul away and die upon.
[*A low voice sings without;* MERTOUN *enters through the window.*
MERTOUN: My very heart sings, so I sing, beloved.
The meeting that appalled us both so much
Is ended.
MILDRED: What begins now?
MERTOUN: Happiness
Such as the world contains not.
MILDRED: We—do we
Deserve that? Utter to your soul what mine
Long since, beloved, has grown used to hear,
Like a death-knell, so much regarded once
And so familiar now; this will not be.

Sin has surprised us; so will punishment.
Have I received in presence of them all
The partner of my guilty love—with brow
Trying to seem a maiden's brow—with lips—
With cheek that looks a virgin's—
How you must
Despise me.

MERTOUN: Mildred, answer me—first pace
The chamber with me—what it is of me
You see contempt (for you did say contempt),
Contempt for you in! Mildred, feel you not
That now I think upon your purity
And utter ignorance of guilt—if sorrow—
Sin—if the end came—must I now renounce
My reason, blind myself to light, say truth
Is false, and lie to God and my own soul?
Oh, to love less what one has injured! Dove,
Whose pinion I have rashly hurt, my breast—
Shall my heart's warmth not nurse thee into strength?
Flower I have crushed, shall I not care for thee?
Mildred, I love you, and you love me!

MILDRED: Go!
Be that your last word. I shall sleep to-night.

[MERTOUN *descends from the window by a yewtree.*

I was so young, I loved him so, I had
No mother; God forgot me; and I fell.
There may be pardon yet. All's doubt beyond.
Surely the bitterness of death is past!

ACT II

SCENE: *The library.* TRESHAM *alone.*

TRESHAM: Oh, thought's absurd. There's cheerful day outside;
This is my library, and this the chair
My father used to sit in; and 'tis here
Gerard our grey retainer—as he says

Fed with our food, from sire to son, an age—
Has told a story I am to believe!
That Mildred . . . oh, no, no! both tales are true,
Her pure cheek's story and the forester's . . .
Avert, O God, only this woe from me . . .
[GUENDOLEN *enters*; TRESHAM *bids her send* MILDRED *to him and wait without, with* AUSTIN. *Enter* MILDRED.

Mildred, here's a line,
"Love conquers all things." What love conquers them?
What love should you esteem best love?

MILDRED: True love.

TRESHAM: I mean, whose love is best of all that love?
Mildred, I do believe a brother's love
For a sole sister must exceed them all.
I think, am sure, a brother's love exceeds
All the world's love in its unworldliness.
Shall I speak, shall I not speak?

MILDRED: Speak.

TRESHAM: Is there a story men could—any man
Could tell of you, you would conceal from me?
Say "There is no such story men could tell,"
And I'll believe you, though I disbelieve
The world—the world of better men than I,
And women such as I suppose you. Speak!
Not speak? Explain then. Mildred! Silent still . . .
Is there a gallant that has night by night
Admittance to your chamber?
Then, his name!

MILDRED: Oh, do not plunge me into other guilt!
Oh, guilt enough! I cannot tell his name.

TRESHAM: I'll hide your shame and mine from every eye;
We two will somehow wear this one day out;
But with to-morrow hastens here, the earl.
Dictate the letter that shall countermand
Last night's—do dictate that.

MILDRED: But, Thorold, if
I will receive him?

TRESHAM (*starting up*): Ho there! Guendolen!
[GUENDOLEN *and* AUSTIN *enter.*
Look! There! The soft sly wanton that receives
Her guilt's accomplice 'neath this roof, which holds
You, Guendolen, you Austin, and has held
A thousand Treshams—never one like her.
Know her!

GUENDOLEN: Oh Mildred! Look to me at least:
Thorold—

MILDRED: All's truth. Go from me.

TRESHAM: All is truth . . .
It were not impossible to bear;
But this—that fresh from last night's pledge renewed
Of love with the successful gallant there,
She stands there, calmly gives her lover up
As means to wed the earl, that she may hide
Their intercourse the surelier; and for this
I curse her to her face before you all.
Shame hunt her from the earth! Then Heaven do right
To both! It hears me now—shall judge her then.
[MILDRED *faints,* TRESHAM *rushes out.*

AUSTIN: Stay, Tresham, we'll accompany you.

GUENDOLEN: We?
What, and leave Mildred? We? Why, where's my place
But by her side, and where yours but by mine?

AUSTIN: No, Guendolen! I echo Thorold's voice.
She is unworthy to behold . . .

GUENDOLEN: Us two?
If you, the soldier, I, her cousin, friend—
If with a death-white woman you can help,
Let alone sister, let alone a Mildred,
You left her—we should be unworthy, both,
To be beheld by—by—your meanest dog.
Austin, do you love me? Here's Austin, Mildred,
Your brother says he does not believe half,

No, nor half that, of all he heard! He says,
Look up and take his hand!
AUSTIN: Look up and take
My hand, dear Mildred.
MILDRED: I—I was so young!
Beside, I loved him, Thorold—and I had
No mother; God forgot me; so I fell.
Now punish me! A woman takes my hand?
Let go my hand! You do not know, I see.
I thought that Thorold told you. Loose my hand.
GUENDOLEN: Here, Mildred, we two friends of yours will wait
Your bidding. Austin, go, until I call you.
[*Exit* AUSTIN.
MILDRED: O Guendolen, I love you!
GUENDOLEN: Yes; and love
Says you confide in me. Your lover's name?
MILDRED: I cannot tell his name.
GUENDOLEN: You love him still?
Lord Mertoun and your lover are the same!
MILDRED: By all you love, sweet Guendolen, forbear:
Have I confided in you . . .
GUENDOLEN: Just for this!
Austin! Oh, not to guess it at the first!
[*Enter* AUSTIN.
You said there was a clue. Remember, sweet,
He said there was a clue! I hold it. Come!

ACT III

SCENE I.—*The avenue under* MILDRED'S *window.* TRESHAM *concealed. A bell sounds midnight. Enter* MERTOUN *cloaked.*

MERTOUN: Not time! Beat out thy last voluptuous beat
Of hope and fear, my heart! I thought the clock
I' the chapel struck.

[*The light is set in the window.*
And see, my signal rises, Mildred's star.
[TRESHAM *seizes him as he prepares to climb.*
Unhand me, peasant, by your grasp. Here's gold.
TRESHAM: Into the moonlight yonder, come with me!
Out of the shadow.
MERTOUN: I am armed, fool!
TRESHAM: Yes
Or no? You'll come into the light?
MERTOUN: That voice,
Where have I heard . . . No, that was mild and slow.
I'll come with you.
TRESHAM: You're armed; that's well. Declare
Your name. Who are you?
MERTOUN: (*aside*) Tresham! She is lost!
Know me, Lord Tresham. (*Dropping the cloak.*)
TRESHAM: Mertoun! Draw now.
MERTOUN: Hear me
But speak first.
TRESHAM: Not one least word on your life.
With God's help I retain, despite my sense,
The old belief—a life like yours is still
Impossible. Now draw!
MERTOUN: Not for my sake
Do I entreat a hearing; for your sake,
And most for hers.
TRESHAM: A miscreant like yourself,
How must one rouse his ire? A blow? Come, draw.
MERTOUN: 'Twixt him and me and Mildred, Heaven be judge!
[*They fight*: MERTOUN *falls.*
TRESHAM: You are not hurt? Not hurt? It cannot be.
MERTOUN: Lord Tresham, I am very young, and yet
I have entangled other lives with mine.
Do let me speak, and do believe my speech!

Oh, stay by me! When I was less than boy
I did you grievous wrong, and knew it not—
Upon my honour, knew it not. Once known,
I could not find what seemed a better way
To right you than I took. My life—that's nothing:
And I must wring a partial—dare I say
Forgiveness from you, ere I die?

TRESHAM: I do
Forgive you.

MERTOUN: Mildred! What will Mildred do?
Tresham, her life is bound up in the life
That's bleeding fast away. Had you but heard!
Had you but heard! What right had you to set
The thoughtless foot upon her life and mine,
And then say, as we perish, "Had I thought,
All had gone otherwise?" We've sinned, and die.
Never you sin, Lord Tresham, for you'll die
And God will judge you.

TRESHAM: Yes, be satisfied!
That process is begun.

MERTOUN: Say this to her,
You, not another—say, I saw him die
As he breathed this, "I love her," you don't know
What those three small words mean . . .
Die you with me,
Dear Mildred! 'Tis so easy! For God
We're good enough, though the world casts us out.

[*As* MERTOUN *dies,* GUENDOLEN, AUSTIN, *and* GERARD *enter with lights.*

TRESHAM: I, only I, see Mildred.

GUENDOLEN: She will die.

TRESHAM: Oh, no, she will not die! I dare not hope
She'll die. What ground have you to think she'll die?
He let me slaughter him—the boy! I'll trust
The body then to you. When next we meet
We shall be friends . . .

SCENE II.—MILDRED'S *chamber*.. MILDRED *alone*.

TRESHAM (*without*): Mildred.

MILDRED: Enter. You? Alone?

TRESHAM: Mildred.

MILDRED: You call me kindlier by name
Than even yesterday. What is in that? sweet?

TRESHAM: Forgive me, Mildred! Are you silent,

MILDRED (*starting up*): Why does not Henry Mertoun come to-night?
You've murdered Henry Mertoun! Now proceed!
What is it I must pardon? This and all?
Well, I do pardon you—I think I do.
Thorold, how very wretched you must be.

TRESHAM: Had I but heard him—had I let him speak
Half the truth—less—had I looked long on him
I had desisted. Why, as he lay there,
The moon on his flushed cheek, I gathered all
The story ere he told it: I saw through
The troubled surface of his crime and yours
A depth of purity immovable.
I would not glance. My punishment's at hand.
There, Mildred, is the truth! And you, say on,
You curse me?

MILDRED: As I dare approach that Heaven
Which has not bade a living thing despair,
But bids the vilest worm that turns on it,
Desist and be forgiven. I—forgive not,
But, bless you, Thorold, from my soul of souls!
[*Falls on his neck and dies.*

Enter GUENDOLEN *with* AUSTIN

GUENDOLEN: She's dead.

AUSTIN: Leave her
And look to him! What ails you, Thorold?

TRESHAM: I said, just as I drank the poison off,
The life out of all life was gone from me.
Already, Mildred's face is peacefuller . . .
Vengeance is God's, not man's. Remember me! [*Dies.*

Strafford

Persons in the Drama

CHARLES I.
THOMAS WENTWORTH, *afterwards* Earl of Strafford
PYM
HAMPDEN
HOLLIS, *Strafford's brother-in-law*
YOUNG VANE
RUDYARD
FIENNES
SAVILE THE QUEEN LADY CARLISLE
Strafford's Adherents, Puritans, etc.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*The* KING *has sent for* WENTWORTH *from Ireland.* YOUNG VANE, HAMPDEN, *and other parliamentary leaders assembled to take counsel.*

VANE: This Charles, who treads our England underfoot,
Has just so much—it may be fear or craft—
As bids him pause at each fresh outrage; friends,
He needs some sterner hand to grasp his own,
Some voice to ask, "Why shrink Am I not by?"
A man, that England loved for serving her,
Found in his heart to say, "I know where best
The iron heel shall bruise her, for she leans

"Strafford" was written for the actor Macready in 1837. It takes an original and powerful view of the riddle of the career of Charles I.'s great minister, whose betrayal, as some think, is the greatest blot on his master's character. Wentworth, at first a parliamentary leader, became the great instrument of absolute government. Lady Carlisle plays a quite unhistorical part in it. "Strafford" was never a successful stage production.

Upon me when you trample." Witness, you!
So Wentworth heartened Charles; so England fell.
[*Enter* PYM.

PYM: Spite of the past, Wentworth rejoins you, friends.
Vane never knew that Wentworth loved that man,
Felt glad to stroll with him, arm locked in arm,
Never sat down, say, in the very house
Where Eliot's brow grew broad with noble thoughts. . . .
I have had friends—all here are fast my friends—
But I shall never quite forget that friend.

VANE: Till we crush Wentworth for her, there's no act
Serves England.

VOICES: Vane for England!

PYM: Pym should be
Something to England. I seek Wentworth.

SCENE II.—*Whitehall.* WENTWORTH *and* LADY CARLISLE.

WENTWORTH: And the king?

LADY CARLISLE: Dear Wentworth, lean on me! Sit then.

WENTWORTH: Why does the king distrust me?

LADY CARLISLE: He does not.

WENTWORTH: Lucy, you can help me; you
Have seemed to care for me: help me!
Is it the queen?

LADY CARLISLE: No, not the queen, the party
That poisons the queen's ear. . . . A council sits
About this Scots affair.

WENTWORTH: A council sits?
The war? They cannot have agreed to that?
Not the Scots war? Without consulting me—
Me, that am here to show how rash it is . . .
Forget it, Lucy! Cares make peevish; mine
Weigh me—but 'tis a secret—to my grave.

[*Exit* LADY CARLISLE.

Forsake the people! I did not forsake
The people! They shall know it, when the king
Will trust me! Who trusts all beside at once,
While I have not spoke Vane and Savile fair
And am not trusted. But he'll see me now.

[*Enter* KING CHARLES.

Sire, trust me! But for this once, trust me, sire!
CHARLES: What can you mean?
WENTWORTH: That you should trust me! now!
Oh, not for my sake! but 'tis sad, so sad
That for distrusting me you suffer—you
Whom I would die to serve. Sire, do you think
That I would—— Ah, one can't tear out one's heart,
And show it, how sincere a thing it is.
CHARLES: Your friend the countess told me.
WENTWORTH: No, hear nothing,
Be told nothing, about me. You're not told
Your right hand serves you, or your children love you!
CHARLES: You love me, Wentworth; rise!
WENTWORTH: I can speak now.
Sire, a great thought comes to reward your trust.
Summon a Parliament! In Ireland first,
Then here. That saves us. All the faction's plans
Suppose no Parliament.
CHARLES: Take this ere you go!
Now do I trust you? You're an earl, my friend
Of friends.
WENTWORTH: My whole heart stays with you, my king!

[*Exit* WENTWORTH.

ACT II

SCENE I.—*In the absence of* WENTWORTH, *now* EARL OF STRAFFORD, *Parliament has been called, subsidies demanded and refused, and the Parliament dis-*

solved, without STRAFFORD'S *knowledge.* PYM *assures the Parliament leaders that this will make* STRAFFORD *break with the* KING *and rejoin them.*

SCENE II.—*Whitehall.* STRAFFORD, *just returned, is with the* KING.

STRAFFORD: Sire, who has done this? My army all is raised,
When for some little thing, my whole design
Is set aside. Where is the wretched paper—
Is this my plan?

CHARLES: You are disrespectful, sir.

STRAFFORD: My liege, do not believe it! I am yours,
Yours ever; 'tis too late to think about;
To the death yours. Elsewhere, this untoward step
Shall pass for mine; the world shall think it mine.
But here! But here! I am so seldom here,
Seldom with you, my king! I soon to rush
Alone—upon a giant—in the dark.
Now, for God's sake, sire, not one error more!
We can afford no error; we draw now
Upon our last resource: the Parliament
Must help us.

CHARLES: I've undone you, Strafford!

STRAFFORD: Nay—
Sire, do you turn from me?

CHARLES: My friend of friends!

STRAFFORD: We'll make a shift. Leave me the Parliament!

CHARLES: Alas!

STRAFFORD: (What has he done?)
But speak at once, sire, this grows terrible . . .
You have dissolved them. I'll not leave this man.
Well, then, I take the army. . .
Sire, you'll not ever listen to these men,
And I away fighting your battles? Sire,
Say you "At any time when he returns

His head is mine!" Don't stop me there! You know
My head is yours; but never stop me there!

CHARLES: Too shameful, Strafford! You advised the war . . .

STRAFFORD: I! I! That was never spoken with
Till it was entered on! That loathe the war!
Do you know, sire, I think within my heart
You will not step between the raging people
And me to say. . I knew it! Oh, to have
A heart of stone, of smooth, cold, frightful stone.

[*Enter* PYM, HAMPDEN, VANE, *and others.* STRAFFORD *at once before them announces the responsibility for the war. Exit* CHARLES.

PYM: Strafford is doomed. Touch him no one of you!

[*Exeunt all but* STRAFFORD. *Enter* LADY CARLISLE.

LADY CARLISLE: I know it all.

STRAFFORD: Ah? You know?
Well, I shall make a sorry soldier, Lucy!
All knights begin their enterprise, we read,
Under the best of auspices; 'tis morn,
The lady girds his sword upon the youth—
We've the fair lady here; but she apart—
A poor man, rarely having handled lance,
And rather old, weary, and far from sure
His squires are not the giant's friends; well—well—
Let us go forth.

LADY CARLISLE: To Scotland? Not to Scotland?

STRAFFORD: The King stood there, 'tis not so long ago,
There; and the whisper, Lucy, "Be my friend
Of friends"—My King! I would have

LADY CARLISLE: Died for him?

STRAFFORD: Sworn him true, Lucy. I *will* die for him.

LADY CARLISLE: (One must not lure him from a love like that.)
You'll think of me sometimes?

STRAFFORD: How think of him
And not of you? Of you, the lingering streak
(A golden one) in my good fortune's eve?
LADY CARLISLE: Strafford . . . Well, when the eve has its last streak,
The night has its first star. [*Exit.*
STRAFFORD: Her voice . . . His voice
Is soft too. Only God can save him now . . .
The man with the mild voice and sorrowful eyes
Which send me forth . . . to breast the bloody sea
That sweeps before me: with one star for guide.
Night has its first supreme forsaken star.

ACT III

SCENE I.—*Whitehall. Again while* STRAFFORD *is in the north, a Parliament has been summoned. The* KING *has sent for* STRAFFORD, *and* PYM *has moved the Commons to impeach him.* SAVILE *and others bring the news to the* QUEEN *and* LADY CARLISLE.

SAVILE: 'Tis to the Lords they go; to seek redress
On Strafford from his peers—the legal way.
The Commons only mean to frighten him
From leaving York. In my poor mind, a fright
Is no prodigious punishment. We'll dispense
With seeing Strafford for a month or two.
[*Enter* STRAFFORD.
QUEEN: You here!
STRAFFORD: The King sends for me, madam.
QUEEN: Sir,
The King . . .
STRAFFORD: An urgent matter that imports the King.
QUEEN: Keep him in play, Lucy—you, self-possessed
And calm. To spare your lordship some delay
I will myself acquaint the King. (*To* LADY CARLISLE) Beware.

[*Exeunt all but* LADY CARLISLE *and* STRAFFORD.

STRAFFORD: The moment's the great moment of all time.
She knows my purpose?
LADY CARLISLE: Thoroughly. Just now
She bade me hide it from you.
STRAFFORD: Quick, dear girl,
The whole o' the scheme?
LADY CARLISLE: Strafford, the whole is known.
STRAFFORD: He'll sanction it! I stayed, girl, tell him, long;
Tell him I waited long!
LADY CARLISLE: (What can he mean?)
You were not wont to look so happy.
STRAFFORD: Sweet,
God put it in my mind to love, serve, die
For Charles, but never to obey him more.
While he endured their insolence at Ripon
I fell on them at Durham.
LADY CARLISLE: Strafford, Strafford,
What daring act is this you hunt?
STRAFFORD: No, no. (*drawing out papers.*)
'Tis here, not daring if you knew! all here!
Full proof! From Savile and his lords to Pym—
I crush them, girl! Pym shall not ward the blow
Nor Savile crawl aside from it. The court
And the Cabal—I crush them! 'Tis no link
In the background I promise you! I go
Straight to the House of Lords to claim these men.
This life is gay and glowing, after all.
'Tis worth while, Lucy, having foes like mine
Just for the dear bliss of crushing them. To-day
Is worth the living for! "My friend of friends"!

SCENE II.—*Antechamber of the House of Lords.* STRAFFORD *is within; his* ADHERENTS *and* PURITANS *of the other party are bandying words. Then the doors of the chamber open;* STRAFFORD *issues through them, amid cries from within of "Void the House."*

STRAFFORD: Impeach me! Pym! I never struck, I think,
The felon on that calm, insulting mouth
When it proclaimed—Pym's mouth proclaimed me . . . God!
Was it a word, only a word, that held
The outrageous blood back on my heart—which beats!
Which beats! Some one word—"Traitor," did he say,
Bending that eye, brimful of bitter fire
Upon me? [*Cries from within of* "STRAFFORD."
Slingsby, I've loved you at least;
Stab me . . . You then, dear Bryan . . . (*To the* Presbyterians) You!
Not even you?
The Queen and Vane—I see
The trap (*Tearing off the George*). I tread a gee-gaw under foot
And cast his memory from me. One stroke now!
[*His own* ADHERENTS *disarm him.*
England! I see thy arm in this and yield.
Pray you now—Pym awaits me; pray you now.
(*The doors open as* STRAFFORD *reaches them; as he kneels the scene closes.*

ACT IV

SCENE I.—*The impeachment has proceeded.* HOLLIS, STRAFFORD'S *friend, has urged the* KING *to intervene. What if* STRAFFORD *produces the proofs that all he had done was by the* KING'S *orders?* CHARLES *will not dare to assume the responsibility, but signs*

an order—a plan proposed by LADY CARLISLE—*for bringing the army up from York.* LADY CARLISLE *is to give this to* STRAFFORD *before he opens his defence.*

SCENE II.—*A passage adjoining Westminster Hall.* STRAFFORD, HOLLIS, LADY CARLISLE.

STRAFFORD: Girl, I refuse his offer; whatsoever
It be! Too late! Tell me no word of him.
'Tis something, Hollis, I assure you that,
To stand, sick as you are, some eighteen days
Fighting for life and fame against a pack
Of very curs. Nay, girl, why look so grieved?
All's gained without the King. Girl, I'll tell you—
You and not Pym—you, the slight, graceful girl,
Tall for a flowering lily, and not Charles,
Why I stood patient. I was fool enough
To see the will of England in Pym's will;
To dream that I had wronged her, and to wait
Her Judgment. When behold! in place of it—
Girl, care not for the past, so indistinct,
Obscure—there's nothing to forgive in it,
'Tis so forgotten. From this day begins
A new life, founded on a new belief
In Charles.

HOLLIS: In Charles? Return, appeal to Pym.

STRAFFORD: I would not look upon Pym's face again.

[*Exeunt. Enter* YOUNG VANE *and* HAMPDEN; *then* PYM, FIENNES, RUDYARD, *and others.*

VANE: Oh, Hampden, save that great misguided man!
Plead Strafford's cause with Pym.

RUDYARD: You cannot snatch away
The last spar from the drowning man.

FIENNES: Take heart!
This Bill of his Attainder shall not have
One true man's hand to it.

VANE: Dear Hampden, not this Bill! Reject this Bill!

PYM: But I have made myself familiar, Fiennes,
With this one thought—have walked and sat and slept,
That thought before me. I have done such things
Being the chosen man that should destroy
The traitor.
RUDYARD: But this unexplained course,
This Bill!
PYM: By this, we roll the clouds away
Of precedent and custom, and at once
Bid the great light God, which set in all,
The conscience of each bosom, shine upon
The guilt of Strafford. We introduce
The Bill of his Attainder. Pray for me.

SCENE III.—*Whitehall.* KING CHARLES.

CHARLES: My noble servant! To defend himself
Thus irresistibly, withholding aught
That seemed to implicate us. [*Enter* PYM.
PYM: I would apprise you of the novel course
The people take. I pray you, read. That Bill
Is framed by me. If you determine, sire,
That England's manifested will should guide
Your judgment, ere another week that will
Shall manifest itself. If not—I cast
Aside the measure. Yet, I warn you, sire
(With Strafford's faded eyes yet full on me),
As you would have no deeper question moved
—"How long the Many must endure the One,"
Assure me, sire, if England shall assent
To Strafford's death, you will not interfere!
CHARLES: God forsakes me. I am in a net,
I cannot move. Let all be as you say!
[*Exit* CHARLES.
PYM: The great word went from England to my soul,
And I arose. The end is very near. [*Exit.*

Act V

Scene I.—*The Tower.* Strafford *with his children.*

Strafford (*meditating*): Forsook them!

What, the common songs will run
That I forsook the people? Nothing more?
The patriot Pym, and the Apostate Strafford!
[*Enter* Hollis *with a companion.*
No—Hollis? in good time! Who is he?
Hollis: One
That must be present.
Strafford: Ah, I understand.
They will not let me see poor Laud alone!
How politic! Well, Hollis? Say at once
The King could find no time to set me free.
I know, instead of coming here at once—
Leading me forth before them by the hand,
I know the King will leave the door ajar
As though I were escaping. Let me have
The order of release! I've heard as well
Of certain poor manœuvrings.
Hollis: Spare me.
Strafford: Why, he'd not have me steal away?
(*To* Hollis's *companion.*)
Ah, you feel for me!
Still there is one that does not come . . . there's one
That shut out heaven from me.
Hollis: Think on it then!
Calmly . . . as one . . . as one to die!
Strafford: Die? True, all must die, and all must need
Forgiveness. I forgive him from my soul.
Hollis: 'Tis a world's wonder: Strafford, you must die.
Strafford: Sir, if your errand is to set me free,
This heartless jest . . . What if . . .
We'll end this! See this paper! warm—warm

With lying next my heart. Whose hand is there?
Whose promise? Read! The King, who lived—
HOLLIS: To sign the warrant for your death.
CHARLES: You would not see me, Strafford, perish at your foot!
It was wrung from me! Only curse me not
[*The children are heard singing.*
STRAFFORD: You'll be good to those children, sire? You know
'Tis between you and me. What has the world
To do with it? Farewell.
[*Enter* LADY CARLISLE, *with attendants.*
LADY CARLISLE: Follow me, Strafford, and be saved
STRAFFORD: My King!
Oh, had he trusted me, his friend of friends!
Leave me. Girl, humour me, and let me die.
LADY CARLISLE: To save the King!
[*The door opens, discovering* PYM, HAMPDEN, *and others.*
PYM: Have I done well? Speak, England!
Whose great sake
I still have laboured for.
STRAFFORD: I have loved England too.
I trust the King now wholly to you, Pym—
And yet I know not. Oh, my fate is nothing—
Nothing! But not that awful head! Not that!
Pym, save the King! I, that am dying, think
What must I see! 'tis here—all here! . . .
What if I curse you? Send a strong curse forth
Clothed from my heart, capped round with horror, till
She's fit with her white face to walk the world
Scaring kind natures from your cause and you—
See, Pym, for my sake, mine who kneel to you!
PYM: England, I am thine own! Dost thou exact
That service? I obey thee to the end!
STRAFFORD: Oh God, I shall die first!

SAMUEL BUTLER

Hudibras

Canto I

The author describes the accomplishments of the gallant knight, Sir Hudibras, and of his squire, Ralpho.

When civil dudgeon first grew high,
And men fell out, they knew not why;
When hard words, jealousies and fears
Set folks together by the ears;
When gospel-trumpeter, surrounded
With long-ear'd rout, to battle sounded;
And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist instead of a stick;
Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
And out he rode a-colonelling.

Samuel Butler was born at Stensham, Worcestershire, England, on February 8, 1612. The son of a farmer, he was educated at Worcester Grammar School. Little is really known of his life, but he appears to have spent a great part of it domesticated as secretary in the houses of persons of ancient family; and in this capacity he is said to have served the Countess of Kent, the Earl of Carbery, the Duke of Buckingham, and Sir Samuel Luke, who shares with Sir Henry Rosewell the dubious honour of being the original of Sir Hudibras. Butler, who married a widow, and who is said to have been proficient in the art of painting, achieved fame three years after the Restoration by the publication of the first part of his great mock-heroic poem. The second part of "Hudibras" appeared in 1664, and the third in 1678. Two years later, on September 25, 1680, the poet died. Of his posthumous works the "Gervaise Remains" were brought out in 1759, and a book of "Characters" was published only in 1907. The complaint that Butler was neglected, though applauded, by King Charles II. and his court must not be taken too seriously. Such evidence as we possess goes to show that the great satirist was a man of a surly, ungenial, ill-conditioned temper, one whom, in any circumstances, it would have been difficult to oblige.

A wight he was, whose very sight would
Entitle him Mirror of Knighthood,
That never bowed his stubborn knee
To anything but chivalry;
Nor put up blow, but that which laid
Right worshipful on shoulder-blade.
But here our authors make a doubt,
Whether he were more wise or stout;
We grant, although he had much wit,
H' was very shy of using it,
As being loth to wear it out,
And therefore bore it not about,
Unless on holydays or so;
As men their best apparel do.
He was in logic a great critic,
Profoundly skilled in analytic;
He could distinguish and divide,
A hair 'twixt south and south-west side;
On either which he could dispute,
Confute, change hands, and still confute;
He'd undertake to prove by force
Of argument, a man's no horse;
He'd prove a buzzard is no fowl,
And that a lord may be an owl;
He'd run in debt by disputation,
And pay with ratiocination;
All this by syllogism, true
In mood and figure, he would do,
In mathematics he was greater
Than Tycho Brahe or Erra Pater;
For he, by geometric scale,
Could take the size of pots of ale;
Resolve by sines and tangents straight
If bread or butter wanted weight;
And wisely tell what hour o' th' day
The clock does strike, by algebra.

Besides, he was a shrewd philosopher,
And had read ev'ry text and gloss-over;
Whate'er the crabbed'st author hath,
He understood b' implicit faith;
Whatever sceptic could inquire for,
For ev'ry why he had a wherefore;
He knew what's what, and that's as high
As metaphysic wit can fly.
For his religion, it was fit
To match his learning and his wit:
'Twas Presbyterian true blue.
For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints whom all men grant
To be the true Church Militant;
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery;
And prove their doctrine orthodox,
By apostolic blows and knocks;
Call fire and sword and desolation
A godly, thorough Reformation,
Which always must be carry'd on,
And still be doing, never done;
As if religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended.
A sect whose chief devotion lies
In odd, perverse antipathies;
In falling out with that or this,
And finding somewhat still amiss;
More peevish, cross, and splenetic,
Than dog distract or monkey sick;
That with more care keep holyday
The wrong, than others the right way;
Compound for sins they are inclin'd to,
By damning those they have no mind to.
Still, so perverse and opposite,

As if they worshipp'd God for spite,
The self-same thing they will abhor
One way, and long another for;
Freewill they one way disavow,
Another, nothing else allow.
All piety consists therein
In them; in other men all sin.
  A squire he had whose name was Ralph,
That in the adventure went his half.
Though writers, for more stately tone,
Do call him Ralpho, 'tis all one;
And when we can, with metre safe,
We'll call him so; if not, plain Ralph
(For rhyme the rudder is of verses,
With which, like ships, they steer their courses).
An equal stock of wit and valour
He had laid in. By birth a tailor,
His knowledge was not far behind
The knight's, but of another kind.
And he another way came by't.
Some call it Gifts, and some New Light;
A lib'ral art, that costs no pains
Of study, industry, or brains,
His wit was sent him for a token,
But in the carriage crack'd and broken;
He ne'er consider'd it, as loth
To look a gift-horse in the mouth,
And very wisely would lay forth
No more upon it than 'twas worth;
But as he got it freely, so
He spent it frank and freely, too.
For saints themselves will sometimes be,
Of gifts that cost them nothing—free.
By means of this, with hem and cough,
Prolongers to enlighten'd stuff,
He could deep mysteries unriddle,
As easily as thread a needle,

For as of vagabonds we say
That they are ne'er beside their way,
Whate'er men speak by this new light
Still they are sure to be i' th' right.
'Tis a dark lantern of the spirit,
Which none see by but those that bear it;
A light that falls down from on high
For spiritual trades to cozen by;
An *ignis fatuus,* that bewitches,
And leads men into pools and ditches,
To make them dip themselves, and sound
For Christendom in dirty pond;
To dive like wild-fowl for salvation,
And fish to catch regeneration.
  Thus was th' accomplish'd squire endued
With gifts and knowledge per'lous shrewd.
Never did trusty squire with knight,
Or knight with squire, e'er jump more right.
Their arms and equipage did fit,
As well as virtues, parts, and wit.
Their valours, too, were of a rate;
And out they sally'd at the gate.

Canto II

Sir Hudibras, having been set in the stocks as the result of his unsuccessful attempt to put down bear-baiting, and having been released from his ignominious confinement by the rich widow whom he would make his wife, deliberates whether he is in honour bound to submit to that test of flagellation which she has demanded as a proof of his affection and he has solemnly sworn to undergo.

The sun had long since in the lap
Of Thetis taken out his nap,
And like a lobster boiled, the morn
From black to red began to turn;
When Hudibras, whom thoughts and aching
'Twixt sleeping kept all night and waking,
Began to rub his drowsy eyes,

And from his couch prepar'd to rise;
Resolving to despatch the deed
He vow'd to do with trusty speed.
But first with knocking loud, and bawling,
He rous'd the squire, in truckle lolling.
They got—with much ado—to horse,
And to the castle bent their course,
In which he to the dame before
To suffer whipping-duty swore;
Where now arriv'd, and half-unharnest,
To carry on the work in earnest,
He stopp'd and paus'd upon the sudden,
And with a serious forehead plodding,
Sprung a new scruple in his head,
Which first he scratch'd and after said,
"Whether it be direct infringing
An oath, if I should waive this swinging,
And what I've sworn to bear, forbear,
And so b' equivocation swear;
Or whether 't be a lesser sin
To be forsworn than act the thing,
Are deep and subtle points, which must,
T' inform my conscience, be discust;
In which to err a tittle may
To errors infinite make way.
And therefore I desire to know
Thy judgment e'er we further go."
Quoth Ralpho, "Since you do enjoin't,
I shall enlarge upon the point;
And, for my own part, do not doubt
Th' affirmative may be made out.
That saints may claim a dispensation
To swear and foreswear on occasion,
I doubt not but it will appear
With pregnant light; the point is clear.
Although your Church be opposite
To ours as Black friars are to White,

In rule and order, yet I grant
You are a Reformado saint;
And what the saints do claim as due,
You may pretend a title to.
But saints, whom oaths and vows oblige,
Know little of their privilege;
Further, I mean, than carrying on
Some self-advantage of their own.
For if the devil, to serve his turn,
Can tell truth, why the saints should scorn,
When it serves theirs, to swear and lie
I think there's little reason why;
Else h' has a greater power than they,
Which 'twere impiety to say.
We're not commanded to forbear,
Indefinitely, at all to swear;
But to swear idly, and in vain,
Without self-interest or gain.
For breaking of an oath, and lying,
Is but a kind of self-denying,
A saint-like virtue; and from hence
Some have broke oaths by Providence,
Some, to the glory of the Lord,
Perjur'd themselves, and broke their word;
And this the constant rule and practice
Of all our late apostles' acts is.
Oaths were not purpos'd, more than law,
To keep the good and just in awe,
But to confine the bad and sinful,
Like mortal cattle in a pinfold."
  Quoth Hudibras, "All this is true.
Yet 'tis not fit that all men knew
Those mysteries and revelations;
And, therefore, topical evasions
Of subtle turns and shifts of sense
Serve best with th' wicked for pretence,
Such as the learned Jesuits use-

And Presbyterians, for excuse
Against the Protestants, when th' happen
To find their churches taken napping.
As thus: a breach of faith is duple,
And either way admits a scruple,
And may be, *ex parte* of the maker,
More criminal than the injured taker.
For he that strains too far a vow
Will break it, like an o'erbent bow;
And he that made, and forc'd it, broke it,
Not he that for convenience took it.
What's justice to a man, or laws,
That never comes within their claws?
They have no pow'r to admonish;
Cannot control, coerce, or punish,
Until they're broken, and then touch
Those only that do make 'em such.
The court of conscience, which in men
Should be supreme and sovereign,
Is 't fit should be subordinate
To every petty court i' th' state,
And have less power than the lesser
To deal with perjury at leisure?
Why should not conscience have vacation
As well as other courts o' th' nation;
Have equal powers to adjourn,
Appoint appearance and return?
If oaths can do a man no good
In his own bus'ness, why they should,
In other matters, do him hurt,
I think there's little reason for 't.
He that imposes an oath, makes it,
Not he that for convenience takes it.
Then how can any man be said
To break an oath he never made?
These reasons may perhaps look oddly
To th' wicked, though they evince the godly;

But if they will not serve to clear
My honour, I am ne'er the near."

Canto III

The knight, having been granted an interview by the lady, at which he falsely alleges that he has kept his oath, and having combated with great eloquence heretical views of love and marriage, is at last cruelly entreated and cudgelled by some mock friends whom she has provided to make a kind of anti-masquerade. Left half dead, he is discovered by his squire and dragged from the house.

Who would believe what strange bugbears
Mankind creates itself of fears,
That spring, like fern, that insect weed,
Equivocally, without seed,
And have no possible foundation,
But merely in th' imagination?
  This Hudibras had prov'd too true,
Who thought the fiends did him pursue.
For having now begun to find
They'd left the enemy behind,
And saw no further harm remain
But feeble weariness and pain;
And having paus'd to recollect,
And on his past success reflect,
To examine and consider why,
And whence, and how, he came to fly;
And when no devil had appear'd
What else it could be said he fear'd?
  Quoth he, "It was thy cowardice
That made me from this leaguer rise,
And, when I'd half reduc'd the place,
To quit it infamously base;
To make me put myself to flight
And, conqu'ring, run away by night;
To drag me out, which th' haughty foe
Durst never have presum'd to do;
To mount me in the dark by force

Upon the bare ridge of my horse,
Expos'd in querpo to their rage,
Without my arms and equipage."
"All this," quoth Ralph, "I did, 'tis true,
Not to preserve myself, but you,
Who, though th' attempt had prov'd in vain,
Had had no reason to complain;
But since it prosper'd, 'tis unhandsome
To blame the hand that paid your ransom;
No martial project to surprise
Can ever be attempted twice;
And therefore I, with reason, chose
This stratagem t' amuse our foes,
To make an hon'rable retreat,
And waive a total sure defeat.
For those that fly may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain.
'Tis plain you cannot now do worse
Than take this out-of-fashion'd course;
To hope, by stratagem, to woo her,
On waging battle to subdue her.
But rather strive by law to win her,
And try the title you have in her.
Your case is clear, you have her word,
And me to witness the award;
Besides two more of her retinue
To testify what pass'd between you.
Law is the wisdom of all ages,
And manag'd by the ablest sages;
Who, though their bus'ness at the bar
Be but a kind of civil war,
They never manage the contest
T' impair their public interest;
Or by their controversies lessen
The dignity of their profession.
While all professions else are found
With nothing but disputes t' abound;

But lawyers have more sober sense,
Than t' argue at their own expense.
So if you follow their advice,
In bills and answers and replies,
They'll write a love-letter in Chancery,
Shall bring her upon oath to answer ye,
And soon reduce her to b' your wife,
Or make her weary of her life."
  The knight who us'd with tricks and shifts
To edify by Ralpho's gifts,
But in appearance cry'd him down
To make 'em better seem his own,
Resolv'd to follow his advice,
But kept it from him by disguise.
  Quoth he, "This gambol thou advisest
Is, of all others, the unwisest;
'Tis but to hazard my pretence,
Where nothing's certain but th' expense.
But is as bad t' attempt, or worse,
He that complies against his will,
Is of his own opinion still,
Which he may adhere to, yet disown,
For reasons to himself best known.
I, who resolve to oversee
No lucky opportunity,
Will go to counsel, to advise
Which way t' encounter, or surprise;
And, after long consideration,
Have found out one to fit th' occasion,
Most apt for what I have to do,
As counsellor, and justice too."

Sir Hudibras has indeed found a counsellor made to his purpose; but he resolves first of all to endeavour to win the lady by a diplomatic letter. To this, however, she sends him a very scornful answer—and at this point the epic ends unfinished, and the account of Sir Hudibras's quest is left undetermined.

LORD BYRON

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage

I.—The First Pilgrimage

WHILOME, in Albion's Isle there dwelt a youth,
And he through sin's long labyrinth had run,
Nor made atonement when he did amiss. . . .
And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;
'Tis said at times the sullen tear would start,
But pride congeal'd the drop within his e'e.

Apart he stalked in joyless reverie,
And from his native land resolved to go,
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea.
With pleasure drugged, he almost longed for woe
And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades below.

Byron was born in 1788; his first publications, in 1807 and 1809, attracted attention, and with the appearance of the first two cantos of "Childe Harold," he "awoke to find himself famous." For the next twelve years he continued to pour forth a quantity of poetry which was immensely popular and won him a European reputation. He proved his sincerity in the cause of freedom by dying on behalf of Greek freedom at Missolonghi in 1824. Of the four cantos of "Childe Harold," the first two (the "First Pilgrimage") appeared at the beginning of 1812, when the Peninsular War was in progress, and Napoleon was planning his Moscow campaign. The third canto belongs to the year after Waterloo, and the fourth is two years later. The whole poem takes colour so much from the contemporary historical events that these dates are necessary for an appreciation of the variation in the points of view. The poem describes the travels of an imaginary wanderer, "Childe Harold"; but by the time the fourth canto is reached, the fiction is practically stopped, and the "pilgrim" is Byron himself.

In this mood, Childe Harold took ship for Spain, and sang his farewell.

Adieu, adieu! My native shore
  Fades o'er the waters blue;
The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,
  And shrieks the wild sea-mew.
Yon sun that sets upon the sea
  We follow in his flight;
Farewell awhile to him and thee,
  My native land—Good-night.

He landed in Portugal, whose people

Lick yet loathe the hand that waves the sword;
To save them from the wrath of Gaul's unsparing lord.

The populace of Lisbon inspired his contempt; Cintra, the scene of the "Convention" at the beginning of the Peninsular War, awoke his indignation. With satisfaction he passed the border into

Lovely Spain; renowned, romantic land!
Awake, ye sons of Spain! Awake! Advance!
Lo! Chivalry, your ancient goddess, cries,
But wields not as of old her thirsty lance,
Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the skies.
Now on the smoke of blazing bolts she flies,
And speaks in thunder through yon engine's roar!
In every peal she calls "Awake! Arise!"
Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,
When her war-song was heard on Andalusia's shore?

On the fields of Talavera and Albuera he moralises on the vanity of the slaughter. He views the gaieties of Seville, rises to enthusiasm over the story of the heroic "Maid of Saragoza." Cadiz shows him a bull-fight.

Foil'd, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,
Full in the centre stands the bull at bay,
Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,
And foes disabled in the brutal fray;
And now the matadores around him play,

Shake the red cloak, and poise the ready brand;
Once more through all he bursts his thund'ring way—
Vain rage! the mantle quits the cunning hand,
Wraps his fierce eye—'tis past—he sinks upon the sand.

But Cadiz had defied the usurper:

Such be the sons of Spain, and strange her fate!
They fight for freedom who were never free,
A kingless people for a nerveless state;
Her vassals combat when their chieftains flee,
True to the veriest slaves of treachery.
Fond of a land which gave them nought but life,
Pride points the path that leads to liberty;
Back to the struggle, baffled in the strife,
"War, war," is still the cry, "War ever to the knife!"

From Cadiz he sailed through the Straits, by "Calypso's Isle," Gozo, where "sweet Florence," a potential Calypso, failed to detain him. His objective was Albania, the ancient Epirus, passing through the Ionian islands, Ithaca and Leucadia, and Actium, the scene of Octavian's triumph over Antony and Cleopatra.

Land of Albania! Where Iskander rose;
Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,
And he his namesake, whose oft-baffled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprise:
Land of Albania! Let me bend mine eyes
On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage men!
The cross descends, thy minarets arise,
And the pale crescent sparkles in the glen
Through many a cypress grove, within each city's ken.

In Albania he visited the celebrated chief Ali Pacha in his luxurious palace. There also, when his vessel was driven ashore by adverse winds, he met with unlooked-for hospitality from the fierce Suliotes, saw their war-dance, and heard their war-song. Thence he journeyed to Greece itself.

Spirit of Freedom! When on Phyle's brow
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
Could'st thou forebode the dismal hour which now
Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?

Hereditary bondsmen! Know ye not
  Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be wrought? . . .
And yet, how lovely in thine age of woe,
Land of lost gods and god-like men, art thou!

Where'er we tread, 'tis haunted, holy ground;
  No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around
  And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
  Till the sense aches with gazing, to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon.
  Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crushed thy temples gone;
Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares grey Marathon.

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same;
  Unchanged in all except its foreign lord—
Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame:
  The battle-field, where Persia's victim horde
  First bowed beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,
As on the morn to distant glory dear,
  When Marathon became a magic word;
Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear
The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career.

The flying Mede, his shaftless, broken bow,
  The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
Mountains above, earth's, ocean's, plains below;
  Death in the front, destruction in the rear!
  Such was the scene—what now remaineth here?
What sacred trophy marks the hallowed ground,
  Recording freedom's smile, and Asia's tear?
The rifled urn, the violated mound,
The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger! spurns
    around.

From the lament over the departed glories of Greece, the degeneracy of her modern sons who

. . . prate of war but skulk in peace,
The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all he's lost,
Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can accost,

the wanderer turns to "mourn o'er hours which we no more shall see," heedless now of the "strife for fading bays," since all are gone whose approbation he cared to win, "and none are left to please where none are left to love," and he is now alone upon the earth.

II.—Childe Harold's Second Pilgrimage

Napoleon has fallen, and Childe Harold resumes his pilgrimage, "with nought of hope left, but with less of gloom," having in the interval mixed again with mankind, in whose society he still fails to find satisfaction. So

Once more upon the waters! Yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me, as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome to their war!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead.

He visits the field of Waterloo, where the despot had been struck down, only that despotism might be more firmly riveted upon the nation.

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand breasts beat happily, and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spoke again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell! . . . .
Arm! arm! It is—it is, the cannon's opening roar!

The stirring battle-piece follows, but it is "for loftier harps than mine" to hymn the warriors' praise. His rather to moralise on the broken hearts they have left which "yet brokenly live on."

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst, of men.
Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,
  Battling with nations, flying from the field;
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
  More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield:
  An empire thou could'st crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
  However deeply in men's spirits skilled,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted fate will leave the loftiest star.

From the contemplation of tremendous ambitions overthrown, Childe Harold turns again to Nature; to the majestic Rhine, with her streams, dells, crags, castles; introducing the song

The castled crag of Drachenfels
  Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters widely swells
  Between the banks which bear the vine.

So he comes to Switzerland, saluting Morat, the scene of the Switzer's victory over Burgundy—Morat, a name to be coupled with Marathon. The solitude of the mountains calls to him, and he witnesses Lake Leman, in calm and storm.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
  But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep.
  All heaven and earth are still; from the high host
  Of stars to the lull'd lake and mountain coast
All is concentred in a life intense,
  Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf, is lost
But hath a part of being, and a sense
  Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

The sky is changed—and such a change! O night
  And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
  Of a dark eye in woman! Far along
  From peak to peak the rattling crags among

Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers through her misty shroud
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud.

III.—The Pilgrim in Italy

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs,
A palace and a prison on each hand. . . .
I loved her from my boyhood; she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn and of wealth the mart.

Venice lies smitten; yet, from the example even of the brutes, we who are of a nobler clay may endure and shrink not. Thence to the mountain village of Arqua, that holds Petrarch's bones; Ferrara, the seat of the house of Este, whose cruel treatment of the great Torquato Tasso is her eternal shame; the abode of Ariosto, the bard of Chivalry; Florence, "the Etrurian Athens," the city of the Medicean Venus—

The loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam;

Florence, where the graves of Santa Croce hold the dust of Angelo, Alfieri, Galileo, Machiavelli.

"From them I pass"—

For I have been accustomed to entune
My thoughts with Nature.

At the falls of Velino:

How profound
The gulf! And how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent
To the broad column which rolls on.

And now we are in sight of Rome—
The Niobe of Nations! There she stands
Childless and crownless in her voiceless woe;

An empty urn within her withered hands,
  Whose holy dust was scattered long ago.

What, then, of the great she-wolf, that suckles Romulus and Remus? She still keeps guard; but all her foster children are dead, unmatched by any since; for "one vain man" alone, "a kind of bastard Cæsar," has come near to their supremacy—Napoleon. Has Freedom now no champions? Are tyrants overthrown only to make way for fresh tyrants? No; the seed of Freedom's tree survives yet in the bosom of the North. Cypress and ivy, weed and wall-flower, cover the ruins on what was once the Imperial Mount. Where are the rock of triumph and Tarpeia's? The fair fount of the nymph Egina suggests meditations on the illusion of love. But most terrific in its suggestion is the Coliseum.

I see before me the gladiator lie;
  He leans upon his hand; the manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
  And his dropped head sinks gradually low—
  And through his side the last drops ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy one by one
  Like the first of a thunder shower; and now
The arena swims around him; he is gone
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch
    who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
  Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He recked not of the life he lost, nor prize;
  But where his rude hut by the Danube lay:
  There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he their sire,
  Butchered to make a Roman holiday—
All this rushed with his blood—shall he expire,
And unavenged? Arise, ye Goths, and glut your ire.

But, amid this decay, these ruins of Empire, shall not the Pantheon last—"simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime?"
But the pilgrimage is over.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
  There is a rapture on the lonely shore,

There is society where none intrudes
  By the deep sea, and music in its roar.
  I love not man the less, but Nature more
From these our interviews, in which I steal
  From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll!
  Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
  Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
  The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's voyage, save his own,
  When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths, with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown . .

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
  Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wafted them, while they were free,
  And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
  The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts; not so thou,
  Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
  Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now . . .

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme
  Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
  The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
  My midnight lamp—and what is writ is writ—
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
  That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

Don Juan

I.—Donna Julia and Haidee

I WANT a hero—so I'll take Don Juan.
In Seville was he born, a pleasant city,
Famous for oranges and women; he
Who has seen it will be much to pity,
So says the proverb—and I quite agree;
Of all the Spanish towns is none more pretty,
Cadiz, perhaps—but that you soon may see.

His father was Don José, a true Hidalgo of the bluest blood: not particular at all.

His mother was a learned lady, famed
For every branch of every science known,
In every Christian language ever named,
With virtues equalled by her wit alone.

She, Donna Inez, was very particular indeed. They quarrelled, and were on the verge of a divorce suit, when Don José died; so little Juan was educated by his mother. He was educated beautifully, on nicely expurgated editions of the classics, with the expurgations collected in appendices, and on the most moral

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The first cantos of "Don Juan" did not appear until 1819, when Byron had already been before the public as a highly popular, but distinctly alarming poet. His descriptive powers had been early displayed in "Childe Harold," wherein he had already assumed the pose of the bard of the sin-scathed brow, which he sedulously maintained in the "Corsair," the "Giaour," and the rest of the poems that set the Byronic fashion. In "Don Juan," however, he adopted the less heroic rôle of the satirist, who regards conventional morality with contempt, and the common profession of adherence to it as a very shallow kind of hypocrisy; a satirist whose purpose is serious while his method is the reverse. It purports to describe the career of an adventurer, and was obviously without plan, and capable of being extended indefinitely. The actual concluding cantos appeared in 1823. It includes one very famous lyric, the "Isles of Greece."

kind of literature. So that he grew up to sixteen quite a model boy.

Amongst the young matrons whom the boy met was Donna Julia, wife of Don Alfonso; which was all very well when the lady was twenty and the boy was thirteen, but when he was sixteen and she was twenty-three—her husband being twice her age, or thereabouts—platonic affection became a different affair. Juan fell in love with her without the least understanding what was the matter with him.

'Tis sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
  Bay deep-mouthed welcome as we draw near home;
'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
  Our coming, and grow brighter when we come;
'Tis sweet to be awakened by the lark,
  Or lull'd by falling waters; sweet the hum
  Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
  The lisp of children and their earliest words.
  Sweet is revenge, especially to women,
  Pillage to soldiers, prize-money to seamen.
  But sweeter still than this, than these, than all,
    Is first and passionate love.

But the practical effects in this case were a jealous husband, an *esclandre,* tears, desolation for Donna Julia, and our young Don Juan packed off on his travels, starting on board ship from Cadiz. Behold him on his barque, bidding a tearful farewell to his native land, et cetera, until sea-sickness gave him something else to think of.

A gale arose in the night, and

There's nought, no doubt, so much the spirit calms
  As rum and true religion; thus it was
Some plunder'd, some drank spirits, some sung psalms.
  The high wind made the treble, and as bass
The hoarse, harsh waves kept time; fright cured the qualms
  Of all the luckless landsmen's sea-sick maws:
Strange sounds of wailing, blasphemy, devotion,
Clamour'd in chorus to the roaring ocean.

The ship was battered into a wreck; passengers and crew—that is, the few there was room for—took to the boats, among

them being Don Juan. The party in his boat had a hideous experience. Having consumed their provisions and everything else eatable, they began to prey on each other. Finally, they drifted within sight of land, and, coming near the shore, the boat was upset. Juan being an excellent swimmer—

He could, perhaps, have passed the Hellespont,
As once (a feat on which ourselves we prided)
Leander, Mr. Ekenhead, and I did—

managed to struggle to land, and lost consciousness. When he revived, it was to find bending over him a lovely female face of seventeen.

The land was a small isle of the Cyclades; the maid was Haidee, daughter of its owner, Lambro, who had grown rich by piracy and selling his captives as slaves.

He was the mildest-mannered man
That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat.
Pity he loved adventurous life's variety,
He was so great a loss to good society.

Haidee, however, was not disposed to hand over her find to the tender mercies of her parent. She and her maid, Zoë, kept things quiet, and took the utmost care of the handsome young stranger, who enjoyed himself extremely. The pair, in short, fell very thoroughly in love, and things were simplified when the paternal pirate went on a cruise. On the other hand, they became complicated when he came back, unbeknown and unexpectedly, to find that he was supposed to be dead, and his wealth was being expended in lavish revelries, during which the young couple listened to a poet's song.

The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone
I dreamed that Greece might still be free.
For, standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave . . .
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down your cup of Samian wine.
Well, the sad truth which hovers o'er my desk
Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.
And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
'Tis that I may not weep.

The loving pair were startled by Lambro's sudden appearance before them. Haidee shrieks; Juan snatches a sword from the wall. Lambro calmly covers them with a pistol; Haidee flings herself between them on Juan's breast. As Juan will not drop his sword, Lambro whistles for his followers. Juan is soon overpowered, after accounting for sundry assailants and being wounded himself. He is carried off, and tumbled into Lambro's cargo of slaves. Haidee, in the violence of her semi-Oriental emotions, bursts a blood-vessel, and dies after a few days.

But many a Greek maid in a loving song
  Sighs o'er her name; and many an islander
With her sire's story makes the night less long;
Valour was his, and beauty dwelt with her.

II.—Juan in the East

Juan now found himself with a party chiefly of Italian singers and musicians, whose *impresario* had evaded his obligations by arranging for their capture by Lambro; they were now all on their way to Constantinople to be sold as slaves.

To the slave-market they came in due time. Luck placed Juan in the immediate neighbourhood of one man who had an English look, and appeared to take the whole situation with much *sangfroid;* the Englishman, however,

Soon began to show
A kind of blunt compassion for the sad
  Lot of so young a partner in the woe,
Which for himself he seemed to deem no worse
Than any other scrape—a thing of course.

They entered on conversation. The Briton explained he had

Served for some
Months with the Russian army here and there;
And taking lately, by Suwarrow's bidding,
A town, was ta'en himself instead of Widdin.

His attitude to the whole affair was eminently philosophical, and his present desire only to get bought as soon as possible. And presently a negro eunuch appeared, who, after some chaffering, bought the pair.

They were taken off in a boat, and then conducted by the

black through a great garden to a palace. Juan's suggestion *en route* that they should knock their conductor on the head was suppressed by the commonsense of his companion, who pointed out that they would only be recaptured, with additional inconvenience. Arrived at the palace, they were fitted out in fresh attire by the eunuch, Juan's costume, to his intense indignation, being feminine. The general outcome of a situation which finally became somewhat compromising was that the eunuch, two of the ladies of the palace, Juan, and the adventurous Englishman found it prudent to make a bolt for it together, and betake themselves to the Russian army, at that time engaged in the siege of Ismail.

The Russian forces before Ismail included

Foreigners of much renown
Of various nations, and all volunteers;
Not fighting for their country or its crown,
But wishing one day to be brigadiers;
Also to have the sacking of a town,
A pleasant thing to young men at their years.
'Mongst them were several Englishmen of pith,
Sixteen called Thomson and nineteen named Smith.

The gory but unsuccessful character of the attempts to carry Ismail caused the famous Suwarrow to be sent to take the affair in hand. His arrival filled the whole camp with joy:

There was not a luggage boy but sought
Danger and spoil with ardour much increased;
And why? because a little, odd, old man,
Stript to his shirt, was come to lead the van.

His methods were peculiar; he, the commander-in-chief, deigned to drill his men himself.

At which your wise men sneered in phrases witty;
He made no answer, but he took the city . .
Hero, buffoon, half-demon, and half-dirt.

To him arrives our party, headed by John Johnson, the Englishman. Suwarrow knew him, and his worth as a soldier; so that he, and on his recommendation, Juan, were promptly appointed to a corps which was to take a leading part in the grand assault.

Hark! through the silence of the cold, dull night
  The hum of armies gathering rank on rank!
Lo, dusky masses steal in dubious sight
  Along the leaguer'd wall and bristling bank
Of the armed river, while with straggling light
  The stars peep through the vapours dim and dank
Which curl in curious wreaths; how soon the smoke
Of hell shall pall them in a deeper cloak!

Juan and Johnson then fought with might and main in the storming, until, by some accident, Juan found himself separated from his party; however, the pair soon came together again, both having succeeded in joining the second column of attack. After a desperate struggle they carried the rampart, followed by the attacking columns. Nevertheless, the town still took a deal of winning, in the course of which, Juan found opportunity for one good deed. No quarter was being given by the Cossacks to age or sex; but Juan managed to rescue a little girl of ten, whom a couple of them were on the point of cutting down. At length, the last post was surrendered. Of the forty thousand who had held Ismail only a few hundreds survived.

Suwarrow now was conqueror—a match
  For Timour or for Zinghis in his trade.
While mosques and streets beneath his eyes like thatch
  Blazed, and the cannon's roar was scarce allayed,
With bloody hands he wrote his first despatch;
  And here exactly follows what he said:
"Glory to *God* and to the Empress! (*Powers Eternal! such names mingled!*) Ismail's ours."

After which exploits Juan is sent off with the despatch for which all Petersburg is on the watch. This special honour was conferred because he had behaved with courage and humanity. And he took with him the little girl, whose entire family had been slaughtered, so that she was homeless, houseless, helpless. Of the Turkish ladies and of Johnson we hear no more.

III.—Juan in England

Juan and little Leila went to Petersburg, where he soon won the favour of the Empress Catharine, who found his graceful attractions a pleasing variation on the charms of the six-foot grenadiers who were her especial *penchant,* till

All the ambassadors of all the Powers
  Inquired who was this very new young man,
Who promised to be great in some few hours.

Juan's rapid rise was communicated by him to his relations in Spain, to the pious satisfaction of Donna Inez; however, he fell seriously ill, and though he recovered, it was felt that the climate of Petersburg was not good enough for him. Therefore, he was sent off to England to conduct certain secret treaty negotiations. The little Moslem Leila went with him. She quite refused to become a Christian. They posted through Prussia and Saxony to the Rhine, thence to the Hague, and so to England, where he took up his semi-official quarters in the great city and immediately found himself a centre of attraction and interest. Also he saw the "greatest living poet."

In twice five years, the "greatest living poet,"
  Like to the champion in the fisty ring,
Is called on to support his claim, or show it,
  Although 'tis an imaginary thing.
Even I—albeit I'm sure I did not know it,
  Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king—
Was reckoned a considerable time
  The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.

But how shall I relate in other cantos,
  Of what befel our hero in the land
Which 'tis the common cry and lie to vaunt as
  A moral country? But I hold my hand—
For I disdain to write on Atalantis;
  But 'tis as well at once to understand
You are not a moral people, and you know it,
  Without the aid of too sincere a poet.

At an early stage Juan got little Leila off his hands, entrusting her education to Lady Pinchbeck, who knew at least enough of the world to be a much better guardian than any "prude without a heart."

Don Juan saw that microcosm on stilts
  Yclept the Great World . . .
At first he did not think the women pretty,

I say at *first*—for he found out at *last,*
  But by degrees, that they were fairer far
Than the more glowing dames whose lot is cast
  Beneath the influence of the eastern star.

And now, the poet continues,

  I now mean to be serious: it is time.
I should be very willing to redress
  Men's wrongs and rather check than punish crime,
Had not Cervantes in that too true tale
Of Quixote, shown how all such efforts fail?
Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away.

The Lady Adeline Amemdeville now becomes the heroine, a lady as chaste as fair; her spouse, the estimable Lord Henry, a typical English gentleman. Both of them approved of Juan. When the "London winter ended in July" (since Parliament is our barometer), Lord Henry and the Lady Adeline left London for their country seat, where there assembled a notable gathering of the Upper Ten—including the last new member who had made "the best first speech ever made"—a heterogeneous group which suggests that

Society is now one polished horde
Form'd of two mighty tribes, the *Bores* and *Bored.*

Being a born horseman, Juan acquitted himself triumphantly on the hunting-field, though he did not fully appreciate the sport. He danced to perfection. And Lady Adeline was disturbed at seeing omens of a flirtation with the Duchess of FitzFulke. So Lady Adeline took him in hand, and pointed out the advantages of matrimony. Also she suggested a variety of more or less suitable young ladies. Curiously enough, however, she omitted to name the one of them all who was obviously the most suitable because she also was a Catholic, Aurora Raby. She was also very young, beautiful, wealthy, and virtuous; but Lady Adeline —when Juan mentioned her himself—

Marvelled what he saw in such a baby
As that prim, silent, cold Aurora Raby,

which naturally made Juan begin to consider Aurora Raby seriously. In fact, he appeared to be well on the way to fall in love with her when the supernatural intervened. The family ghost of the house—a monk—paid Juan a visitation. His perturba-

tion next morning was so marked that Lord Henry asked him if he had seen the ghost, which led to the story of the monk being told—or rather sung—by Lady Adeline. Juan did not own to having seen the apparition; but when it reappeared the next night, he gave chase, when he had recovered his presence of mind; with the result that he found the ghost to be very much flesh and blood—in fact

The phantom of her frolic Grace—FitzFulke.

CALDERON DE LA BARCA

The Mayor of Zalamea

Persons in the Drama

KING PHILIP II
DON LOPE DE FIGUERRA
DON ALVARO DE ATAIDE, *a captain*
PEDRO CRESPO, *a farmer of Zalamea*
JUAN, *his son*
ISABEL, his daughter
INES, *his niece*
REBOLLEDO, *a soldier*
A SERGEANT, a NOTARY
SOLDIERS, LABOURERS, CONSTABLES, *etc.*

ACT I

SCENE I.—*Country near Zalamea. Enter* REBOLLEDO *and* SOLDIERS.

REBOLLEDO: Confound, say I, these forced marches from place to place; and that infernal drum!

FIRST SOLDIER: Come, Rebolledo, we shall soon be at Zalamea.

REBOLLEDO: And where's the good of that if I'm dead before I get there? And if not, 'twill only be from bad

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Calderon de la Barca, the most typical representative of Spanish national drama, was born at Madrid on January 17, 1600, and spent his earliest years in the study of law and philosophy at Salamanca. Later, in 1625, he entered the army, but there are no records that he ever distinguished himself in that capacity. In the meantime he had composed a number of dramas, which were produced with considerable success, winning for him the praises of Lope de Vega; and at the death of the latter Calderon was summoned to Madrid by Philip IV, to whose

to worse. Up comes Mr. Mayor. A little conversation with Mr. Commissary; a little pocket persuasion, then Mr. Commissary says, "Gentlemen, I'm very sorry, but orders have come for us to march forward, and immediately." Well, I swear that if I do get to Zalamea today, I'll not leave it this side of sunrise. It won't be the first time in my life I've given them the slip.

FIRST SOLDIER: Nor the first time a poor fellow has had the slip given him for doing so. And more likely than ever now, for they say that Don Lope de Figuerra, who has taken over the command, is a devil of a Tartar.

REBOLLEDO: By heaven, I'll be beforehand with him!

SECOND SOLDIER: Come, come, a soldier shouldn't talk so! Let's have a song.

[*They sing. Enter* CAPTAIN DON ALVARO DE ATAIDE *and* SERGEANT.

CAPTAIN: Good news, gentlemen; we halt at Zalamea till Don Lope joins with the rest of the regiment from Llerena.

REBOLLEDO *and* SOLDIERS: Hurrah for our captain!

[REBOLLEDO *and* SOLDIERS *exeunt.*

CAPTAIN: Well, sergeant, where am I billetted?

SERGEANT: With the richest man in Zalamea. A farmer, as proud as Lucifer's heir-apparent, whose daughter is, they say, the prettiest woman in Zalamea.

CAPTAIN: Pooh! A pretty peasant! Splay hands and feet. I can't call a woman a woman unless she's

---

Court he became attached as a master of revels. The rebellion of Catalonia again roused him to action; but ten years afterwards he entered the priesthood, becoming a chaplain of honour to Philip. From this time until his death—and "he died," said his friend De Solis, "as they say the swan dies, singing"—on May 25, 1681, Calderon was a prodigious worker, his collected plays amounting to 122. He wrote many more, but several were never published. The "Mayor of Zalamea" is a typical specimen of Calderon's genius; it shows him a master of dialogue, of interesting situations, and of stage technique. It is also thoroughly Spanish, and for that reason it still holds its own in Spain.

clean about the hands and otherwise well appointed—a lady, in short. Well, carry my kit to quarters, and then come and tell me when all's ready.

SCENE II.—*Zalamea, before* CRESPO'S *house. Enter, severally,* CRESPO *with* JUAN, *and the* SERGEANT.

SERGEANT: Pray, does one Pedro Crespo live hereabout?

CRESPO: Have you any commands for him if he does?

SERGEANT: To let him know that Don Alvaro de Ataide, captain of the troop that has just marched in, has been quartered upon him.

CRESPO: Say no more; my house, and all I have, is ever at the service of the king. I will see his room is got ready directly. [*Exit* SERGEANT.

JUAN: I wonder, father, that, rich as you are, you don't avoid these nuisances by buying a patent of gentility.

CRESPO: A patent of gentility! Upon thy life, now, dost think there's a soul who doesn't know that I'm no gentleman at all, but just a plain farmer? If a fellow's been bald ever so long and buys a fine wig, will his neighbours think it's his own hair? They'll know his bald pate is safe under it all the while. No; my grandfather was a farmer, so was my father, so is yours, and so shall you be after him. [*Enter* ISABEL *and* INES. Ah, daughter, some of the soldiers are quartered here to-day. Is it not well that you should be out of the way?

ISABEL: Sir, 'twas for this I came to you. My cousin and I can go up to the garret, and there keep so close the very sun shall not know of our whereabout.

[*Exeunt. Enter* CAPTAIN *and* SERGEANT.

SERGEANT: This is the house, sir.

CAPTAIN: Is my kit come?

SERGEANT: Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

JUAN: Welcome, sir, to our house; we count it a great honour to have such a cavalier as yourself for a guest,

I assure you. May I go and see that your chamber's got ready for you?

CAPTAIN: Thank you, thank you.

JUAN: Your servant, sir. [*Exit. Enter* SERGEANT.

CAPTAIN: Well, sergeant, where's the Dulcinea you told me of?

SERGEANT: I can't find her anywhere, but a serving-wench tells me that she's locked up in the attic, with strict orders not to look out so long as we are in the place.

CAPTAIN: Ah, these clodpoles are all so jealous! And what is the upshot? Why, I who didn't care a pin to see her before, shall never rest till I get at her now.

[*Enter* REBOLLEDO.

Ah, Rebolledo! The very man. I want you to help me in a little plan I have. Now I want to get into that attic there. Look here, you and I will pretend to quarrel. I draw my sword, and you run away upstairs and I after you to the attic.

[*They quarrel, the* CAPTAIN *draws his sword.* REBOLLEDO *runs out, pursued by the* CAPTAIN.

SCENE III.—*Garret.* ISABEL *and* INES.

ISABEL: What noise is that on the stairs?

[*Enter* REBOLLEDO.

REBOLLEDO: Sanctuary! Sanctuary!

[*Enter* CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN: Where is the rascal?

ISABEL: A moment, sir! This poor man has flown to our feet for protection. I appeal to you for it.

CAPTAIN: I swear that no other arm than that of beauty, and beauty such as yours, could have withheld me. (*To* REBOLLEDO) You may thank the gods that have saved you, rascal!

ISABEL: And I thank you, sir.

CAPTAIN: And yet ungratefully slay me with your eyes in return for sparing him with my sword.

[*Kneels. Enter* CRESPO *and* JUAN *with swords.*

CRESPO: How is this, sir? I am alarmed by cries of murder—am told that you have pursued a poor man up to my daughter's room; and when I come up, expecting to find you killing a man, I find you courting a woman.

CAPTAIN: Nay, my sword, justly raised against this man, as justly fell at this lady's bidding.

JUAN (*aside*): All a trick to get at her. (*Aloud*) I think you might have seen enough of my father's desire to serve you to prevent you requiting him by such an affront as this.

CRESPO: And pray who bid thee meddle, boy?

CAPTAIN: Young man, you had best consider before you impute ill intentions to an officer. It is only out of regard for him that I do not chastise you.

[*They quarrel. Enter* DON LOPE.

LOPE: How now? A riot the very first thing I find on joining the regiment? What is it all about?

CRESPO: Nothing; nothing at all, sir.

LOPE: Nothing? Swords aren't drawn for nothing.

CAPTAIN: Well, the simple fact is this. This soldier insulted me so grossly that I drew my sword on him; he ran up here, where it seems these two girls live, and I, meaning no harm, after him. At which these men take affront.

LOPE (*pointing to* REBOLLEDO): Is this the man? Handcuff him!

CAPTAIN (*aside to* REBOLLEDO): Don't blab, I'll bear you harmless.

REBOLLEDO: Oh, I dare say! Noble commander, 'twas the captain's own doing; he made me pretend a quarrel that he might get up here to see the women.

CRESPO: I *had* some cause for quarrel, you see.

LOPE: Not enough to peril the peace of the town for. To prevent further ill blood, do you (*to the* CAPTAIN) quarter yourself elsewhere till we march. I'll stop here.

Act II

Scene I.—*In Zalamea.* Captain, Sergeant, *and* Rebolledo.

Captain: I tell you my love is not a fancy, but a passion, a tempest, a volcano. Ah! Rebolledo, could you get me but one more sight of her.

Rebolledo: Well, now. Let's serenade at the girl's window. She must, in courtesy or curiosity, look out; and then——

Captain: But Don Lope is there, and we mustn't wake him.

Rebolledo: Well, you can mix along with us in disguise. So at least you won't come into it.

Captain: Well, there is but this chance, if it be but faint; for if we should march to-morrow! Come, let us set about it. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A trellis of vines in* Crespo's *garden.* Don Lope, Crespo, Juan, Isabel, *and* Ines *seated at supper. A guitar is heard off.*

Lope: Music, too!

Crespo: None of ours. It must be some of your soldiers, Don Lope.

Lope: Ah, Crespo, the troubles and dangers of war must have a little to sweeten them betimes. The uniform sets very tight, and must be let out now and then.

Juan: Yet, 'tis a fine life.

Lope: Would you like to follow it?

Juan: If I might at your excellency's side.

[*A song is heard, off, in which the name of* Isabel *constantly recurs.*

Lope (*aside*): Pebbles thrown at the window, too; but I'll say nothing, for all sakes. (*Aloud*) I can eat no more, and will to bed.

Crespo: Very good; so will I.

LOPE: Good-night to you all.

JUAN: Good-night, sir.

LOPE (*aside*): I'll see to them. [*Exeunt.*

CRESPO (*aside*): I'll shut the girls up, and then look after 'em. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.—*Outside* CRESPO'S *house. The* CAPTAIN, SERGEANT, REBOLLEDO, *etc., with guitars. It is dark. They sing. During chorus* DON LOPE *and* CRESPO *enter at different sides, with swords, and begin to lay about them. The soldiers are driven off. Enter* JUAN, *with sword and torch.*

JUAN: Where is Don Lope?

LOPE: Crespo!

CRESPO: Don Lope!

LOPE: Didn't you say you were going to bed?

CRESPO: And didn't you?

LOPE: This was my quarrel, not yours.

CRESPO: Very well, and I came out to help you in it.

[*Re-enter* CAPTAIN *and* SOLDIERS, *with swords.*

CAPTAIN: Don Lope!

LOPE: Yes, Don Lope. What is all this, sir?

CAPTAIN: The soldiers were singing and playing in the streets, sir, doing no offence to anyone; but were set on by some of the townspeople, and I came to stop the riot.

LOPE: You have done well. Now order the regiment to march to-morrow, and let me hear of no such disgraceful riots hereafter.

SCENE IV.—*Outside Zalamea.* CAPTAIN, SERGEANT, REBOLLEDO.

CAPTAIN: March you on, sergeant, with the troop. At sundown I shall steal back to Zalamea for my last chance.

REBOLLEDO: Where you have one enemy the less. Don Lope and Isabel's brother took a fancy to each other,

and have persuaded the old man to let him go for a soldier. I have only just met him, as proud as a peacock.

CAPTAIN: All works well. Don Lope has already set off to Guadalupe, as the king is by now on the road. Rebolledo, you shall come with me.

SCENE V.—CRESPO'S *garden porch.* CRESPO, JUAN, ISABEL, *and* INES.

CRESPO: And now, Juan, before going let me give thee a word of advice.

[*Takes him aside. After a while they come forward again.*

JUAN: Your words will live in my heart, sir, so long as it lives. (*He kisses his father's hand.*) Sister! (*He embraces her.*)

ISABEL: Would that I could hold you back in my arms!

CRESPO: Be off, else I shall never let thee go—and my word is given.

JUAN: God bless you all! [*Exit.*

ISABEL: Come, cousin, let us go in.

INES: No, no; let us have a little fresh air now the soldiers are gone.

[*As they talk, the* CAPTAIN, SERGEANT, *and* REBOLLEDO *steal in. The* CAPTAIN *seizes and carries off* ISABEL, *the* SERGEANT *and* REBOLLEDO *seize* CRESPO.

ISABEL (*off*): My father! My father!

CRESPO: Villains! A sword! A sword!

REBOLLEDO: We must carry him off with us, or his cries will rouse the town. [*Exeunt, carrying* CRESPO.

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A wood near Zalamea. It is dark. Enter* ISABEL.

ISABEL: Oh, horror! What shall I do? Whither turn my tottering feet? Back to my aged father, whose only joy it was to see his own spotless honour spotlessly re-

flected in mine—— And yet, if I return not, I leave calumny to make my innocence accomplice in my own shame.

CRESPO (*off*): Oh, in pity, slay me at once!

ISABEL: One calling for death like myself?

CRESPO: Whoever thou art——

ISABEL: That voice! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another place in the wood.* CRESPO *tied to a tree. Enter to him* ISABEL.

ISABEL: My father!

CRESPO: Isabel! Unbind these cords, my child.

ISABEL: I dare not, lest you kill before you hear my story; and you must needs hear that. You know how he who had feigned that quarrel in our house carried me off; till here, where out of reach of pursuit, the wretch began with passionate lies to excuse his violence by his love—his love! Amid my shrieks, entreaties, imprecautions, I heard a rustle in the leaves; it was my brother—who in the twilight understood all without a word—drew the sword you had just given him—they fought—and I, blind with terror, shame, and anguish, fled—till at last I fell before your feet, my father, to tell you my story before I die!

CRESPO: Rise, Isabel, my child. God has chosen thus to temper the cup that else had been too sweet. Come, we will home, my Isabel. (*Aside*) 'Fore Heaven, if I catch that Captain!

VOICE (*off*): Crespo! Peter Crespo!

CRESPO: Who calls? [*Enter* NOTARY.

NOTARY: Oh, here you are at last. Come, a largess for my news. The corporation have elected you mayor.

CRESPO: Me!

NOTARY: Indeed! And already you are wanted. The king is expected almost directly; and, beside that, the captain who disturbed us all so yesterday has been brought back wounded, no one knows by whom.

 [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A room in Zalamea. The* CAPTAIN, *wounded, the* SERGEANT, *and* REBOLLEDO. *Enter* CRESPO, *with wand of office, constables, etc.*

CRESPO (*to* CAPTAIN): I am come to have a few words with you, and, if you please, alone.

[*Exeunt the others.*

CAPTAIN: Well, sir?

CRESPO: Till last night I knew not, except perhaps my humble birth, a single thing fortune had left me to desire. I had a daughter, too, virtuously and modestly brought up, whether fair—— But I will leave what I may to silence; would God I could leave all! But it may not be—you must help me to redress a wound so great as to make cry a heart not used to overflow. Revenge I could easily have, but I seek retribution, not revenge. And what I propose is this. You shall forthwith take all my substance, without reserve of a single farthing—if only you will with it take my daughter to wife, and restore the honour you have robbed.

CAPTAIN: As to the wrong you have talked of, if you would arrange it by force, I have little to fear. As to your magistrate's stick there, it does not touch my profession at all.

CRESPO: I do but ask back my own at the hands of him that robbed me.

CAPTAIN: Nonsense!

CRESPO: Who could extort it if I chose.

CAPTAIN: I tell you you could not.

CRESPO: You are resolved?

CAPTAIN: I am.

CRESPO: Then you shall pay for it! Ho, there!

[*Enter* CONSTABLES, *etc.*

CRESPO: Take this captain to prison.

CAPTAIN: To prison! You can't!

CRESPO: We'll see.

[CONSTABLES *carry him off.*

SCENE IV.—*A room in* CRESPO'S *house.* JUAN. *Enter* CRESPO.

CRESPO: How come you here ?

JUAN: Sent back by Don Lope last night, to see after some missing soldiers. On approaching the town I heard some cries——

CRESPO: And drew your sword on your officer, whom you wounded, and are now under arrest from me for doing it. Within there! (*Enter* CONSTABLES.) Take him to prison!

JUAN: Your own son, sir?

CRESPO: Ay, sir, my own father, if he transgressed the law I am made guardian of. (*They carry off* JUAN.) Who's that calling without? (*Enter* DON LOPE.) Don Lope! What makes you back, sir, so suddenly?

LOPE: A most disgraceful affair. One of my soldiers overtook me in the road, flying at full speed, and told me that the mayor got hold of a captain in my regiment, and put him in prison. Here I am, and, by heaven, I'll thrash this trumpery little jack-in-office of a mayor within an inch of his life. Where can I find him?

CRESPO: Oh, close here.

LOPE: And who is he?

CRESPO: Peter Crespo.

LOPE: Well, Crespo, what's said is said.

CRESPO: And, Don Lope, what's done is done.

LOPE: I tell you, I want my captain.

CRESPO: And I tell you, I've got him.

LOPE: Do you know he's the king's officer?

CRESPO: Do you know I tried first to get him to do me justice with no authority at all, but the offer of all my estate?

LOPE: I tell you, *I'll* settle the business for you.

CRESPO: And I tell you, I never leave to another what I can do for myself.

LOPE: I tell you, once for all, I must have my man.

Within there! (*Enter* ORDERLY.) Have the regiment to the market-place directly, under arms. [*Exit.*

CRESPO: And I—— Hark ye!

[*Exit, whispering to a constable.*

SCENE V.—*Before the prison in Zalamea. Enter on one side,* DON LOPE *with troops; on the other, before the prison,* CONSTABLES, LABOURERS, *etc., armed, and afterwards* CRESPO. *The soldiers prepare to attack the prison. Trumpets (off) and shouts of "God save the King!" Enter* KING PHILIP II., *with retainers, etc.*

KING: What's all this?

LOPE: The mayor has had the impudence to seize a captain in your majesty's service.

KING: Well, Mr. Mayor, what is your defence?

CRESPO: These papers, my liege, in which this captain is clearly proved guilty, on the evidence of his own soldiers, of carrying off a maiden, and refusing her the satisfaction of marriage though peaceably entreated to it by her father, with the offer of all his substance.

KING (*after reading*): I see not but the charge is substantiated, and 'tis indeed a heavy one. But *you* have no authority to punish it. You must let the prisoner go.

CRESPO: You must send for him, then, please your majesty. In little towns like this the deliberative is forced sometimes to be the executive also.

KING: How mean you?

CRESPO: Your majesty will see.

[*The prison gates open, and the* CAPTAIN *is seen within, garrotted in a chair.*

KING: And you have dared, sir!

CRESPO: Your majesty said the sentence was just, and what is well said cannot be ill done.

KING: Don Lope, the thing is done; and if unusually, not unjustly. For you (*to* CRESPO) what is your name?

CRESPO: Peter Crespo, please your majesty.

KING: Peter Crespo, then I appoint you perpetual Mayor of Zalamea. And so farewell. [*Exit.*

LOPE: Come now, wouldn't it have been better to have given up the prisoner, who, at my instance, would have married your daughter, and made her the wife of a Hidalgo?

CRESPO: Thank you, Don Lope. She has chosen to enter a convent, and to be the bride of One who is no respecter of Hidalgos. [*Exeunt.*

GAIUS VALERIUS CATULLUS

Poems

WHAT may have been the earliest missive which passed between Catullus and his lady, the notorious Clodia, was his adaptation of a famous lyric by the Greek poetess Sappho, for whom Catullus had the greatest admiration. Catullus recalls Sappho's association with the island of Lesbos by styling Clodia his "Lesbian Lady."

LOVE'S RAPTURE

Peer of a god he seems to me—
Greater than gods, if that may be!—
Who sits and gazeth, love, on thee
And hears the fall

Of thy sweet laugh. But in my pain
My senses swoon; for, Lesbia, when
I once have seen thee, there remain
No words at call.

Pre-eminent among Latin poets of love was the young Northerner, Gaius Valerius Catullus, who was born at Verona about 84 B.C., and died, probably, in 54 B.C. He came to Rome from his native Verona, and made life one ceaseless round of pleasures. The determining event of his career was his introduction to Clodia. The ruin of his life, she abides his passport to fame, for Catullus's book of love is one of the freshest in all literature. It is an amazing revelation to find in Latin so passionately sincere an utterance. Tennyson styled him "tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago," but the feeling is wider than tenderness. Now it is a burning passion, now wrath. His characteristic is undisguised expression. But he had another side. He was one of a set under the influence of the poetry of Alexandria. To this we owe his "Peleus and Thetis," "Attis," and "Berenice's Lock." Here his Latin attains a rich allusiveness in contrast to his lyrics. Yet those brief songs enrol Catullus in the company of Sappho, Burns, and Shelley. With two exceptions, which have been noted in their place, the translations are by Prof. J. Wight Duff. Those not specially written for THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS have been borrowed, with special permission, from his other contributions to the same subject.

My tongue is palsied; rills of fire
Run through my veins; my ears do quire
To their own throbbing; mists attire
My eyes withal.

To the earlier and happier period of his infatuation belongs the following:

THE RECKLESSNESS OF LOVE

Let's live, my Lesbia, and love,
Let's value not a whit above
A penny all that dotards grey
In tones of condemnation say.
The sun can set, the sun can rise:
Once let the brief light quit our eyes,
And we through endless night must keep
The couch of one unbroken sleep.
Give me a thousand kisses!—more!
A hundred yet; add to the score
A second thousand kisses; then
Another hundred, and again
A thousand more, a hundred still!
So many thousands we fulfil,
We must take care to mix the count—
Bad luck to know the right amount!—
Lest evil eye impose its spell
When it can all our kisses tell.

In lines almost producing the impression of a sonnet he chants—

A DIRGE FOR LESBIA'S PET BIRD

Mourn, all ye powers of Love and Loveliness!
Mourn all the world of taste for beauty rare!
Dead is my lady's sparrow—to possess
Her pet was more than her own eyes to her.
The bird was honey-sweet, and knew his friend
As well as maiden knows a mother's face;
Nor left her lap, but twittered without end
To her alone, and hopped from place to place.

Now fares he on the darkling path of gloom
  From which no traveller returns, 'tis said.
Hell-shades that prey on beauty, black your doom,
  That carried my fair sparrow to the dead!
Woe, deed of ill! For thee, poor little bird,
My lady's eyes with tears are red and blurred.

Other poems are protestations of fidelity on the poet's side, which gradually suggest that their true foil is "Lesbia's" inconstancy. They pass into poems, first of torturing doubt, and afterwards of bitter reproach.

A PROTESTATION

Dare woman say she e'er was loved so much
  As thou, my Lesbia, hast been loved by me?
No bond of plighted troth hath e'er been such
  As that true love wherewith I loved thee.

ON WOMAN'S VOWS

My lady vows she'll marry none but me,
Not e'en tho' very Jove the wooer be.
She vows—but woman's oath to ardent swain
Must be engraved on wind or falling rain.

TO LESBIA ON HER INCONSTANCY

Thou told'st me, in our days of love,
  That I had all that heart of thine;
That e'en to share the couch of Jove
  Thou would'st not, Lesbia, part from mine.

How purely wert thou worshipp'd then!
  Not with the vague and vulgar fires
Which Beauty wakes in soulless men—
  But loved, as children by their sires.

That flattering dream, alas, is o'er—
  I know thee now—and tho' these eyes
Dote on thee wildly as before,
  Yet e'en in doting, I despise.

Yes, sorceress—mad as it may seem—
With all thy craft, such spells adorn thee,
That passion e'en outlives esteem,
And I at once adore—and scorn thee!

(*Moore*)

THE POET'S TORTURE

I hate and love: perchance you ask me why.
Who knows? I *feel* its truth and agony.

LOVER'S QUARRELS

She flouts me ever—cannot spare my name.
Beshrew me, Lesbia loves me all the same!
The proof? Well, we are quits: I storm my fill
At her—beshrew me but I love her still!

A RECONCILIATION

Say you, my life, that we always ever love?
Oh! may no time the pleasing words disprove!
Heaven to these words eternal truth impart!
Let her have breathed them from her inmost heart;
And through our lives to Lesbia's spirit grant
Firmness to keep this holy covenant.

(*Hodgson*)

Lesbia proved incorrigible. For a time passion mastered her lover in despite of reason. The final break came after a prolonged agony wherein he sought to fight his infatuation down. In an intensely moving monologue he struggled to steel himself against the old allurement.

THE HEART'S STRUGGLE

'Tis hard to break with old love in a trice:
'Tis hard—but thou must fashion some device.
Naught else can save: thou shalt tread down thy lust;
Whether 'tis possible or not, thou must!
Ye gods! if ye have ruth, if e'er a soul
At brink of death was by your help made whole,

Look on my woe, and for mine innocence
Remove from me this plague and pestilence,
That stealing thro' my veins like lethargy
Hath exiled from my heart felicity.
I pray no more our mutual love endure,
Or, what can never be, that she be pure.
I would be healed and cast this foul disease:
Ye gods, for my devotion grant me peace!

The last act of the drama was his dispatch of a curt and scathing message of absolute renunciation. She was welcome henceforth to keep her three hundred gallants, loving none truly, but breaking hearts and ruining lives.

FAREWELL TO LESBIA

Let her no more, as once, my passion heed—
My passion which her sin hath made to bleed,
Like flow'ret bruised at margent of a mead
By passing ploughshare.

Very different is the spirit which pervades his lampoons and satiric pieces. An illustration may be found in his jesting lines at the expense of his contemporary so conveniently named "Arrius" to admit of his superfluous aspirates.

ON 'ARRY, THE ROMAN COCKNEY

"*H*advantage" was what 'Arry used to say:
"*H*ambush" for "ambush" was his regular way.
He thought his own pronouncing best on earth—
To asp'rate "*h*ambush" all that he was worth!
His mother so pronounced: so did her brother,
His mother's father, likewise his grandmother.
'Arry was sent abroad: our ears had rest:
We heard the same words tenderly caressed,
Nor thought again to hear such aspiration—
When sudden came the *h*awful *h*information:
The Ionian waves, since 'Arry's tour, were lost,
*H*into the 'igh seas of *H*ionia tossed!

Catullus had a real affection for natural scenery. He was fond of colour and of flowers. In one lyric he breaks into ecstasies

over the coming of spring. In another, his arrival on his estate at Sirmione on his beloved Lago di Garda is celebrated in lines which are suggestive of a sonnet.

"ROW US OUT FROM DESENZANO"

Half islet Sirmio, the gem of all
  The isles which god of sea or god of mere
  Upholds in glassy lake or ocean drear,
On thee with heart and soul my glances fall.

Scarce can I think me safe when I recall
  Bithynia's plains afar and see thee near:
  Ah, what more joyous than the mind to clear
Of care and burdens,—lay aside that gall?

By distant travail worn we win our hearth
  And on the long-wished couch siesta take.
  This is the one reward for those who roam.
Hail, Sirmio, the fair! Greet me with mirth;
  Be mirthful, dancing waters of the lake!
  Laugh out, ye realms of merriment at home!

Joy changes to grief, and a minor key is struck when he approaches his brother's tomb.

CATULLUS AT HIS BROTHER'S GRAVE

I fared o'er many a land and wave,
Brother, to grace with gifts of woe thy grave:
That I may pay death's final due I come,
Invoking, though in vain, thine ashes dumb.
Since fortune hath divided thee and me,
Poor brother, taken from me ruthlessly,
So now and here the wonted gifts I hold
Wherewith a mourner decked a tomb of old.
Take these o'er which a brother's tears do pour:
Hail, brother, and good-bye for evermore!

Some of his most beautiful verses occur in his wedding-hymns. These *epithalamia* are too long to quote here; but a kindred aspect of his genius is seen in his ritual chant to Diana.

A HYMN TO OUR LADY OF THE CROSSWAYS

Diana's youths and maids are we,
Devote to her in fealty:
Come, youths and maidens, passion-free
Sing Dian in a round.

Latonia's child, whom she did bear,
To mightiest Jove a mighty heir,
And by the Delian olive fair
Laid lowly on the ground.

That on the hills thou should'st be Queen,
And Lady of the woodland green,
Ruling the glade's sequestered scene
And rivers that resound.

All mothers who in birth-throes quail
"Juno Lucina" do thee hail:
Strong Trivia thou, Moon-goddess pale
With light from Phœbus found.

Goddess, that by thy monthly road
Dost mete the year out to its node,
Thou mak'st the farmer's rude abode
With goodly fruit abound.

Thy name be hallowed, whichso'er
Doth like thee best; keep in thy care
The Roman race, nor yet impair
Thine ancient aid renowned.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Canterbury Tales

The Canterbury Pilgrims

When draughty March is gone, and April showers
Freshen earth and quicken all the flowers,
And little birds upon the budding trees
Wake in the night and sing their melodies,
Then, moved by the sweet springtime, folks incline
To go on pilgrimage to some great shrine;
And all men of all degrees, from end to end
Of England, unto Canterbury wend,

Geoffrey Chaucer, the "father of English poetry," was the son of a London wine merchant. Born about 1340, he is one of those men whose lives are almost as interesting as their works. At the age of nineteen he fought in France and was there taken prisoner; King Edward III. paid £240 towards his ransom, and made him a yeoman of the royal chamber. In 1366, Chaucer married a maid of honour, and as this lady seems to have been the sister-in-law of John of Gaunt, the poet was then bound to his princely patron by the bond of blood as well as the tie of friendship. He was sent abroad on several affairs of state, and, happily, on these missions the study of foreign poetry was combined with the study of foreign politics. Chaucer was, like Shakespeare, a noble borrower. His "Canterbury Tales" are partly founded on the "Decameron" of Boccaccio (see Vol. I, p. 327); but there is nothing in the Italian writer like Chaucer's narrative power and vividness of character drawing. Also, he was the first of English writers to display those national qualities of genius which found in Shakespeare their supreme expression. Broad humour and delicate wit, piercing pathos and immortal beauty, and, above all, a large sense of the diverse realities of life, are some of the qualities that belong incomparably to this "well of English undefiled," as a later poet named him. Chaucer seems to have died on October 25, 1400, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Instead of keeping to the difficult Old English used by Chaucer, we have partly based our versions on those of Dryden and Wordsworth.

To pray before the tomb of our great Saint,
For peace of soul, or cure of some complaint.

It happened in this season on a day,
In Southwark at the Tabard, as I lay,
Ready to wend upon my pilgrim route
To Canterbury with a heart devout;
At night there came into that hostelry,
Full nine-and-twenty folk in company.
Good pilgrims were they all, I quickly found,
Who were, like me, to Canterbury bound;
And having spoken unto every one
Over the evening meal, I was anon
Admitted to their goodly company.
And then the keeper of our hostelry
A merry, bright-eyed man, said he would ride
At his own cost with us, and be our guide;
Saying, we were the merriest pilgrim band
That he had seen that year in all the land.
And now, I think, 'tis time to stay my verse,
And tell you of my fellow-travellers.

A KNIGHT came first, a very worthy man,
Who, from the earliest time when he began
To ride, had vowed himself to chivalry,
Honour and truth, freedom and courtesy.
And nobly had he fought in Holy Land
In fifteen battles, and had held command
In Africa, in Asia, and in Russia,
And won high honour in the land of Prussia.
And both in Christendom and Heathenness
He was renowned for his great worthiness.
To him, a seat of honour all men gave;
For he was very wise as well as brave,
Yet in his port as meek as is a maid.
He never a discourteous word had said
In all his life, to any living wight.
He was a very perfect, gentle knight.

Beside him rode his son, a handsome SQUIRE
Of twenty years, in glittering attire.
Embroidered was he, as it were a mead
Covered with fragrant flowers white and red.
Singing was he, or fluting all the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
And nimble too, and strong and brave was he,
And three times had he fought across the sea,
Riding to battle bold and bright of face,
In hope to win his lovely lady's grace.
At night his songs of love rang down the dale;
He slept as little as a nightingale.
Courteous he was, modest and serviceable,
And carved before his father at the table.
One servant only by his side was seen—
A YEOMAN, in a coat and hood of green.

A PRIORESS rode behind this gallant boy;
A smiling, simple nun was she, and coy.
Her face was pleasant, and her voice was sweet,
And French she spoke right gracefully and neat
After the school of Stratford at Bow Town,
For French of Paris was to her unknown.
She did not like to copy courtly ways,
And bear herself with stiff and stately grace;
For she was of a free and pleasant mind,
And unto mirth and friendliness inclined.
So tender was her heart, that she was stirred
To tears by a dead mouse or wounded bird.

A MONK behind this kind, sweet Prioress came,
Who loved right well to ride and hunt for game.
A manly man he was, and strong and able,
And many a good horse had he in his stable.
The saintly rules of Maur and Benedict
He held were over-old and over-strict;
He let old things go by, and sought for new,

As most men in this world now used to do.
He cared not for that text a moulting hen,
Which says that hunters are not holy men;
I hold that his opinion was not bad.
Why should he study till he was half-mad,
Or sit in cloisters always book in hand,
Or go and work and labour on the land?
So this good monk in riding took delight,
With greyhounds swift as birds are in their flight;
Great joy he had in hunting down the hare,
And fat he was, and well he loved rich fare.

And next there came a FRIAR, in worsted gown,
Who knew right well each tavern in each town.
Familiar and well-beloved was he
With all the farming men and yeomanry;
Well could he sing, and play upon the harp,
And turn a merry saying or a sharp;
His eyes, they twinkled in his head as bright
As stars do on a clear and frosty night.

Beside a FRANKLIN, jolly, plump, and ruddy,
Who made good food and drink his only study,
There rode a CLERK from Oxford—one who took
No pleasure save in reading in a book.
Lean was his horse, as lean as is a rake;
And he, too, was not fat, I undertake,
But thin and hollow-faced, and somewhat sad,
And in a threadbare garment he was clad.
No benefice had he obtained as yet,
And on no worldly place his mind was set;
For he would rather have at his bed's head
A score of volumes, bound in black and red,
On Aristotle and philosophy,
Than splendid robes, fiddle, and psaltery.
And every farthing given him by a friend
On books of learning he would quickly spend.

And terse and quick and godly was his speech,
And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach.

A SERGEANT OF THE LAW came next—a man
Who seemed to know all that a lawyer can.
Right well could he advise, and judge, and plead,
And draw up wisely every sort of deed.
No busier man in all St. Paul's was seen,
Yet seemed he busier than he was, I ween.

A GOOD-WIFE who had come from Bath rode next—
A witty woman, but with deafness vexed.
Bold was her face, and red and very fair,
And so much glittering finery did she wear
That she was rather vulgarly overdressed,
Though everything she wore was of the best.
But still, as women go, she was not bad;
And though in turn five husbands she had had,
And worried them to death, she was full fain
To find a sixth and go to church again.
Withal, she was an easy, jolly dame,
Gay in her talk and careless of her fame;
In all the arts of love there was, I trow,
Nothing whatever that she did not know.

Close to the good-wife a PHYSICIAN rode,
Whose rich habiliments of crimson showed
What profit he had made in those two years
When the great plague filled all men's minds with fears.
Yet moderate he was in his expense,
Hoarding his profits from the pestilence.
Some say gold is a sovran remedy,
And this physician loved it certainly.

But by him came a PARSON, poor in dress,
But rich in learning and in holiness.

Truly did he Christ's holy gospel teach,
And always practise what he used to preach.
He would not sue for tithes, but freely give—
To help his poor parishioners to live—
All his own substance, and his offerings too.
His wants were humble, and his needs were few.
Wide was his parish, scattered was his flock,
But neither rain, nor snow, nor thunder shock
Prevented him from going to relieve
The sick, the poor, and all who mourn and grieve.
On foot he always went, for he had sold
His horse to help poor widows with the gold.
Trudging along, and leaning on his stave,
This fine example to his flock he gave—
That first he worked, and afterwards he taught,
Which saying from the Bible he had caught.
He won his flock to love and worship God,
By following himself the path Christ trod.

Some way behind this poor and godly priest,
A PARDONER rode upon an ambling beast,
Singing, "Come hither, love, to me." From Rome,
Loaded with red-hot pardons, had he come.
His equal was not to be found, I swear,
For trickery, from Berwick unto Ware.
Among the relics which he had for sale
There were a fragment of Our Lady's veil,
A cross of common metal set with stones,
And a glass case containing a pig's bones.
These he would sell to some poor, foolish priest
As something worth their weight in gold at least.
Such was the rubbish that he trafficked in:
A greater rogue than he was never seen.

A STEWARD and a MILLER too, were there,
A HABERDASHER and a CARPENTER,

A WEAVER, and a DYER, and a COOK
Who, on our pilgrimage, great trouble took
To roast our meat, and make and bake our pies;
A right good cook he was for savouries.
With us to Canterbury now he came,
To cure his leg, for he had fallen lame.
The MILLER was a man of brawn and might,
As ready for a frolic as a fight.
In every wrestling match he won the day,
And on his shoulders bore the ram away.
Red as a fox's fur was his long beard,
And cunning as a fox he was, I heard.
When to his mill the farmer's corn was sent,
It came back ground much smaller than it went.
No wheat he bought, no fields he ever tilled,
But all the year his corn bins were well filled.
And yet he was a jolly soul, I trow,
And honest in his way—as millers go.
Light was his heart, and nimble was his mind,
To music, song and merriment inclined.
When we assembled at the break of day,
He was the first to take the pilgrim way;
Riding in front of all our company,
And blowing on a bagpipe merrily,
With puffing cheeks, and bagpipe strongly blown,
Gaily he played us out of Southwark Town.

"Now," said the keeper of the Tabard Inn,
"I think, Sir Knight, you kindly might begin
A round of tales, to keep us blithe and merry
As we go riding on to Canterbury.
Let each of us now tell a tale in turn,
And then, when we to Southwark town return,
The teller of the tale that pleases most
Shall have a supper at the others' cost."
To this we all agreed with much delight.
And being wise and courteous, the old knight,

Sitting upon his horse, erect and bold,
Began to tell the tale that here is told.

The Knight's Tale

When Theseus, the Athenian monarch, came
To Thebes, and put the town to sword and flame,
Two brave young Thebans of the royal blood,
Arcite and Palamon, his power withstood.
Kinsmen they were and friends, and side by side
They fought, but could not turn the battle's tide;
And so they fell at last, still combating,
Into the hands of the Athenian king.
And Theseus, fearing that the brave young knights
Would struggle to regain their royal rights,
Resolved to make them prisoners for life,
And keep the Thebans from renewing strife.
So, in a tower beside his palace wall,
Arcite and Palamon were put, and all
The doors were bolted; and a year went by,
And still in prison they were forced to lie.
And then as Palamon, upon a day,
At morning in the pleasant month of May,
Was gazing from the window of the tower,
He saw a maiden, fairer than a flower,
Walking in beauty in the garden ground
Below the tower, and singing as she bound
A garland of roses white and red,
To place upon her shining golden head.
"Ye gods!" cried Palamon, "captivity
Is in itself a bitter thing to dree!
Now love, now hopeless love, has come to fill
My heart with greater grief and misery still!"
Hearing his cries, Arcite ran up in haste
To comfort him, but as his arms embraced
His friend he saw the maiden like a flower,
Walking in beauty underneath the tower.

There was a silence. And Arcite then said,
"Unless she love me I shall soon be dead!"
"I saw and loved her first," cried Palamon.
"I swear she shall be mine, and mine alone!
And you, Arcite, my kinsman and my friend,
Are you not sworn to serve me to the end,
As I am sworn to serve you all my life?
Then help me win this maiden for my wife."
"That I will not," Arcite replied; "above
All power of friendship is the power of love.
Stronger than yours my passion is, and I
Must win her for myself, or fail and die.
And I am very like to die," said he,
"For there's no hope that our captivity
Will ever end." But by strange hap, Arcite
Was set at liberty that very night.
A friend this favour from the king obtained,
Upon condition that Arcite remained
Away from Athens. "If Arcite is found,"
Said Theseus sternly, "on Athenian ground
He shall at once be killed." At this Arcite
Cried unto Palamon, "Oh, bitter spite!
Why was I born to such a cruel fate?
Happier are you, my friend, in your sad state.
Liberty only doubles all my pain;
For I shall never see her face again,
While you can sit and watch her from the tower,
And may, by change of fortune, get the power
Of winning her. Farewell, Oh, Palamon,
Think kindly on me now that I am gone!"

The god of love, the god of love! ah me!
How mighty, and how great a lord is he!
There is no power on earth that can withstand
The miracles men work at his command.
Seven years went by, and Palamon still strove
To free himself, and follow his sweet love.

Though now he knew that she was Emily,
The sister of King Theseus—enemy
Of him and all his race—he loved her more
Each time he chanced to see her than before.
Finding at last a friend in his distress,
He broke out of the tower, and donned the dress
And armour of a man of his degree,
And waited in the fields where Emily
Was riding with her maids at break of day,
To pluck green boughs and flowers, for it was May.
As he was hiding in the grass, a knight
Came singing down the road. It was Arcite!
Exile from Emily to him had seemed
Far worse than death, and now at length he deemed
That he had won her heart; for he had come
In strange disguise, bold and adventuresome,
And won renown at the Athenian court.
Sweetly he sang of Emily; but short
His song was. Springing fiercely to his side,
Palamon seized his bridle rein and cried,
"Down, traitor, down! And if you are a man
Fight for your life, and then sing if you can!"
Arcite got down, and drew his sword, and then
They fought more like to tigers than to men.
Neither gave way, but still warred where he stood;
And then, when all their armour streamed with blood,
Emily came riding by, arrayed in green,
And by her side was Theseus with his queen.
"Down with your swords!" the king cried. "If you give
Another stroke, neither of you shall live.
Are you both mad?" "May be," said Palamon,
"Seeing the thing that we are set upon.
We are your mortal foes. He is Arcite,
The Theban lord you vowed that you would smite
Dead if you ever found him in your lands.
And I deserve no pity at your hands,

For I am a Palamon, your prisoner,
Broke out of prison, and now fighting here
With my dear friend and kinsman, as you see,
Instead of flying from captivity."
"Why do you fight?" the king said, with a frown.
"Love," Palamon replied, "has broken down
And utterly destroyed all friendly ties
Between us. Emily, since we were brought
Prisoners to Athens, love for you has wrought
Such rapture, misery, gladness, and despair
In our sad hearts, that we have ceased to care
Whether we lived or died. And now that I
Can never hope to win you, I would die."
Struck by his passion and sincerity,
Theseus said, turning unto Emily—
Who, with the queen, was kneeling at his feet,
And crying, "Pardon! Pardon them!"—"My sweet,
I pardon them right willingly, and now
It lies with you to reconcile them. How
Will you decide, fair sister, which to take
Of these two knights? For both you cannot make
Blest with your love in happy married life.
But hold! There is a way to end this strife
According to the rules of courtesy.
Arcite and Palamon must come to me,
Each with a hundred lords at his command,
And joust in knightly wise for Emily's hand."
At this, bold Palamon and brave Arcite
Were filled with hope, and ardour, and delight.
Great joy was there in Greece. Who would not ride
The lists, and help to win so fair a bride?
Crowds of great kings and conquerors were bent
On fighting in the famous tournament.
So when the knights their bannerets unfurled,
The flower of all the chivalry of the world
Rode at their side; and the earth seemed to rock
When the two hosts met in terrific shock.

Too close it grew for spears; and swords then flashed,
And down on helm and armour maces crashed.
Oh, what a havoc Palamon then made
To reach Arcite! But as he drove his blade
Clean at his foe, full twenty hostile lords
Closed in on him, and lashed him with their swords,
And struck him to the earth. "Have done! have done!"
Cried Theseus, seeing the fall of Palamon.
"Arcite of Thebes has got the victory;
Arcite of Thebes shall now have Emily!"
But as Arcite rode up, with shining eyes
Fixed upon Emily, his lovely prize,
Holding his battered helmet in his hand,
His war-horse swerved close to the royal-stand,
And down he fell on his uncovered head;
And where he fell he laid like one stone-dead.
"What is this world?" he then began to moan,
When Emily came to him, and Palamon,
"What is this world? What joy in it men have?
Now with their love, and now in the cold grave
Alone, and with no kindly company.
Farewell, my life, my love, my Emily!
Now take me gently in your arms, I pray,
For love of God, and list to what I say.
Here is my friend and kinsman, Palamon;
And now I say, there is not any one—
Though I have fought with him in jealousy—
More worthy to be loved by you than he.
If you will be his true and loving wife,
Loyally will he serve you all his life,
In honour, knighthood, wisdom, truth and worth.
Noble is he by nature and by birth."
Then darkness fell upon him, and the breath
Of life went from his body; but in death
Still on his lady did he fix his eye;
His last word was, "Ah, mercy, Emily!"

Sometime, both Emily and Palamon
Mourned for Arcite, but when a year had gone,
King Theseus in solemnity and state
United them in marriage. And thus fate
Gave, in the end, the bride Arcite had won
Unto his friend and kinsman, Palamon.

The Wife of Bath's Tale

In ancient times, in good King Arthur's days,
Our merry England was a faerie place
The elf-queen with her jolly company
Then danced at night on many a flowery lea,
And rings of darker grass at morn were found
In every field where she had led a round.
But now the begging friars have chased away
Each pretty sprite and each delightful fay;
In every spot haunted of old by elves,
You now will find the begging friars themselves.

But in King Arthur's reign this was not so.
One of his knights was riding, sad and slow,
At evening through a meadow, and he spied
Some fairies dancing by a forest side.
Boldly he galloped up to them, to ask
Their help; for he was troubled with a task
Beyond the power of man; but all the fays
Vanished before he reached their dancing-place.
Only a woman, ugly, old, and grim,
He found there. And she rose, and said to him,
"No path is here, Sir Knight. But can I be
Of help to you?" "Yes, Granny," then said he,
"And I must perish if you cannot aid.
For my unknightly conduct to a maid
I have been sentenced by Guinevere,
To come before her throne within a year,

And tell her and her angry damoiselles,
What thing a woman wants above all else.
Long has this question set the court at strife,
And if I solve it not, I lose my life.
The year has now gone by; and I have laid
The case before each mother, bride, and maid
Whom I have met in my long wandering.
But none of them agrees upon the thing
They most desire. For some want flattery,
Some love, some marriage, and some jollity;
And others honour, wealth or rich array—
What is their secret wish I cannot say.
Reveal it, granny, and you shall not want
Aught that I have it in my power to grant."
"Sir Knight," she answered, "will you swear to do
Anything in the world I ask of you
If now I rede the riddle to you aright?"
"Yes, on my honour, granny!" said the knight.
"Take me to court," she said, "and on the way
I then will tell you what you have to say."
When they to court were come, Queen Guinevere
Summoned the knight that evening to appear,
And tell her, at the peril of his life,
What thing it was that widow, maid, and wife
Desired most in the world. "Great Queen," said he,
"What women most desire is—sovereignty.
Fain would each wife obtain complete command
Over her husband, house, and wealth and land.
Single or wed, your sex aspires to sway,—
They to rule all, while men, like slaves, obey."
At this there was no widow, wife, or maid,
Who disagreed with what the knight had said.
Even the queen, with blushing cheeks, confessed
That he had found what women love the best.
And then, as still before the throne he stood,
The beldam he had met beside the wood
Said to the queen, "'Twas I who taught this knight

In what it is we women most delight,
When he had sworn that I should never want
Aught that he had it in his power to grant.
And now I ask him, as I saved his life,
To keep his word, and take me for his wife."
In vain the knight endeavoured to escape,
And tried to treat the matter as a jape;
In vain he offered gold, and land beside,
To free himself from such a withered bride.
The beldam firmly held him to his oath.
And even though Queen Guinevere was loath
To see a young knight in King Arthur's court
Married unto a woman of this sort,
Rather than let him tarnish his fair name
She ordered him to wed the wretched dame.
I cannot tell the mirth and rich array,
And joy and feasting of their marriage day,
And all the splendour of the festival.
In sober truth, there was no feast at all.
It was the saddest moment in his life
When the young knight took home his aged wife.
"Never was knight," he said, "in such disgrace.
Medea's magic could not mend your face.
Not only are you ugly, old, and lean,
But, in your birth, a creature poor and mean.
Were you but nobly born, at least I might
Bear my misfortune bravely like a knight."
"Is that," said she, "what vexes you so sore?
Nobility of blood is nothing more
Than ancient wealthiness. Your pride of birth,
I hold it for a thing of little worth.
If your ancestors by their virtues won
High honour, this belongs to them alone.
Nothing of price do you derive from them
But rank and wealth, on which to base your claim
To greatness and nobility of soul;
Which things no wealth can purchase or control.

Low-born and poor and old I am, and yet
I do not think myself the worse for it.
Christ is our pattern of nobility,
And where was there a poorer man than He?
He only is a true-born gentleman
Who always does what gentle deeds he can.
As for my ugliness and my old age,
Choose now, if you would have me old and sage,
Or young and inexperienced in life."
"Nay, choose yourself," he said, "my wise, old wife."
"Then have I got the mastery of you."
She said, "Since you permit me now to do
What I desire. Look, look, my love!" said she,
"And grieve and wonder at the change in me!"
The knight turned, and discovered at his side
The sweetest, loveliest, and tenderest bride
That ever, since the race of men began,
Brought love and happiness unto a man.

The Prioress's Tale

There was in Asia, in a mighty town
Of Christian folk, a street for Jews to be,
Which had been given to them for their own
By a great lord, for gain and usury,
Hateful to Christ and to His company;
And through this street all men might walk or ride;
Free was it, and unbarred at either side.

A little school of Christian people stood
Down at the farther end, in which there were
Some little children come of Christian blood,
Who studied in the school, from year to year,
The simple learning which was given there;
That is to say, reading and singing too,
As little children in their childhood do.

Among these children was a widow's son,
A little scholar scarcely seven years old,
Who through the street of Jewry used to run
Daily to school, with lightsome heart and bold;
And having by his mother oft been told
To pray unto Our Lady, he would say,
"Hail, Mary!" as he went upon his way.

Great joy this little child in singing took,
And though he was too young to join the choir,
When older children from their anthem book
Sang *Alma Redemptoris,* nigh and nigher
He used to creep, his little heart on fire,
Listening to every word and every note,
Until he got the anthem all by rote.

"*O Alma Redemptoris,*" then he sang,
As home he went, with childish voice and sweet.
"*O Alma Redemptoris,*" loud it rang
And echoed down the darksome Jewish street.
Day after day he sang it, and his feet
Moved lightly to each clear and liquid note
That sounded from his little tender throat.

Meeting this little child upon his path,
A Jew was filled with bitterness. "Oh, woe!
Woe upon Israel!" cried he in his wrath,
"That we should suffer this thing to be so!
What! shall this boy along our own street go
Singing, day after day, his hymns and saws,
Clean against our religion and our laws?"

With evil thoughts his fellows he inspired,
And filled their hearts with wickedness and hate;
Until at last a murderer they hired,

Who in a lonely alley laid in wait;
And as the child one evening, dark and late,
Came singing down the street, the villain slit
His throat, and threw his body in a pit.

The widowed mother waited all that night
After her little child, and he came not.
Then, at the earliest glimpse of morning light,
With face made pale by fear and anxious thought,
For her sweet child through all the town she sought,
Till in the end she learnt that he had been
In the Jew's street, and there he was last seen.

With woe and pity moving in her breast,
And working like to madness in her mind,
She wandered down the street, like one possessed,
Hoping in vain her little child to find;
And ever on Christ's Mother, meek and kind,
She cried for help; and then at last she prayed
The Jews to come in pity to her aid.

Yes, piteously and sadly did she pray
To every Jew and Jewess in that place
To tell her if her child had passed that way.
"No!" said they all. But Jesu of His grace
Guided her wandering steps, in little space,
Close to the pit in which her child was thrown;
And as she called on him with many a moan—

Oh, Thou Great God that dost reveal Thy power
And wisdom by the mouth of Innocence!—
This jewel of chastity, this glorious flower
Of martyrdom, this child of excellence,
Raised from the pit his mangled throat, and thence
"*O Alma Redemptoris*," loudly sang,
Till with the sound the street of Jewry rang.

Full soon all Christian folk from far and near
Came to the pit to wonder at this thing.
They placed the murdered child upon a bier;
And all the time he never ceased to sing.
When to the church the body they did bring,
And blessed and sprinkled it with holy water,
It still sang, "*Alma Redemptoris Mater.*"

All wonder-stricken at this miracle,
The priest cried, "By the Holy Trinity,
I summon you, O little child, to tell
The reason of this wondrous mystery!
How can you still keep singing, clear and free,
The *Alma Redemptoris,* with your head
Nigh severed from your body? Are you dead?"

"My throat is cut unto the bone, I trow,"
Said the young child, "Yea, right unto the bone,
And by the law of nature, long ago,
I should have died. But Jesus now has shown
His power, and made in me His glory known;
Letting me sing, *O Alma Redemptoris,*
In praise and worship of His Mother's glories.

"This was the hymn I sang when I was slain.
Then in the pit to me there did appear
Sweet Jesu's Mother, and she put a grain
Upon my tongue, and said, 'Have thou no fear,
My child, but sing my praises loud and clear,
Till from thy tongue the grain is taken, then
In Heaven thou shalt sing to me again.'"

Then, in the silence of the wondering host,
From off his tongue the priest removed the grain;
And peacefully the child gave up the ghost,
While down his widowed mother's face like rain
The salt tears fell, and with a cry of pain

She dropped upon her face flat on the ground,
And laid as still as if she had been bound.

Then, having praised the Lord with solemn cheer,
For the great miracle that He had wrought,
The people knelt beside the little bier,
On which the child still laid; and having bought
A tomb for him of precious marble wrought,
His sweet and uncorrupted body, they
Enclosed therein, and then began to pray.

"O Martyr wedded to virginity!
Before the white-milk Lamb of Paradise,
Thou goest singing now eternally;
The light of innocence in thy young eyes,
And in thy heart the fire of sacrifice!
Pray, pray, that unto us it may be given
To hear thee singing by the Throne in heaven."

WILLIAM CONGREVE

The Mourning Bride

Persons in the Drama

MANUEL, *King of Granada*
ALPHONSO, *Prince of Valencia*
ALMERIA, *daughter of Manuel*
LEONORA, *her maid*
GARCIA, *a captain of Granada*
ZARA, *a Moorish queen*

ACT I

ALMERIA *is sitting in the palace of her father,* KING MANUEL. *She is in mourning, and so is* LEONORA, *her maid. Shouting is heard in the streets, and* ALMERIA *dismisses her musicians.*

ALMERIA: Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
I've read that things inanimate have moved

William Congreve was born in 1670, near Leeds, but was brought up in Kilkenny and Dublin, and Ireland may claim to have contributed something in forming the most brilliant of English writers of comedy. Even Sheridan is inferior to Congreve in combining wit and sparkle of mind with force and trenchancy of intellect. At the age of twenty-seven, Congreve, who had come to London, was generally recognised as the first dramatist of his period, and Betterton and other actors offered him a share in their theatre on his promising to furnish a play every year. Although "The Mourning Bride" is not so fine as "The Way of the World" (see *post*), it stands very high among the tragedies written in the Restoration period. On its first production at Lincoln's Inn Fields, in 1697, the piece was highly successful, having a run of thirteen days without interruption. Congreve died on January 19, 1728.

And, as with living souls, have been informed
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.
What, then, am I? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees of flint? Alphonso! Oh, Alphonso!
Devouring seas have washed thee from my sight,
My love, my lord, my husband still; though lost.

LEONORA: Husband? Oh, heavens! Your husband? Yet I heard
That when Anselmo captured you in war,
Despite his feud with Manuel, your father,
He then endeared himself to your affection,
By all the ways his goodness could invent;
Proposing, by a match between Alphonso,
His son, the brave Valencian prince, and you,
To end the long dissension and unite
Granada and Valencia in love.

ALMERIA: Yes! On the day when Manuel, my father,
Conquered in turn Anselmo, whom he killed,
Alphonso, who foresaw his cruelty,
Bore me on board his ship, and there we married.
Closely we were pursued; a sudden storm
Wrecked us upon the Moorish coast; and I—
Wedded and widowed in one day—was saved
By our pursuers; but Alphonso perished.
For this I mourn and will for ever mourn.

[*There is a flourish of trumpets, and* KING MANUEL *enters with* GARCIA.

GARCIA: Your pardon, sir, if I presume so far
As to remind you of your gracious promise.

MANUEL: All in good time, my friend. How now, Almeria?
How dare you meet me on this joyful day,
Robed in black raiment and all sad of face?

ALMERIA: Forgive me, sir, if I offend in this;
But I have vowed in gratitude to heaven,
For my deliverance from wreck and death,
To keep in mourning for a year.

MANUEL: Retire;
Divest yourself of that offensive black.
GARCIA (*kneeling*): But, sir!
MANUEL: Rise, Garcia, I forgot. Yet stay, Almeria.
Receive this lord, as one whom I have found
Worthy to be your husband, and my son.
[ALMERIA *staggers, and* GARCIA *leads her to the door; he returns leading in* QUEEN ZARA *and a young* MOOR, *who was taken prisoner with her, while fighting for the dead king,* ANSELMO, *of Valencia.*
MANUEL: What welcome and what honours, beauteous Zara,
A king and conqueror can give are yours.
A conqueror indeed am I, to win
The heart of such a lovely enemy
As you are, O, my queen! What made you bring
An army from Morocco to Valencia,
To help my foe Anselmo?

ZARA (*scornfully pointing to the* MOOR): This base slave,
Whom I raised up to wealth and rank and power,
Urged me to it. Before you marry me,
King Manuel, give me leave to judge this slave,
Here in this room alone with him, at once.

[*The* KING *and all his men retire, leaving the Moorish queen alone with the* MOOR.

ZARA: Thou hast a wild and savage heart, Alphonso!
Give it me as it is; I ask no more.
When I beheld thee driven by the tide
Upon my country's coast, a dying man,
I loved thee even then, for thou wert god-like.
Did I not make this war for thee, and bring
Thousands of soldiers, under thy command,
Across the sea to fight this king, and gain
Granada and Valencia both for thee?
Wilt thou not love me now? All is not lost.

For if thou wilt, King Manuel dies to-night.
Love me, and all my kingdom, too, is thine!

ALPHONSO: I cannot!

ZARA (*in great anger*): Why?

ALPHONSO: I cannot tell you why.

ZARA: Where are my men? (*Opening the door and calling*) Slaves, bind and chain this wretch!
Imprison him in secret, in the tombs
Outside the palace, and watch over him.
Watch that he does not kill himself, and rob me
Of my revenge by swift and easy death.
Vile and ingrate! Too late thou shalt repent
The base injustice thou hast done my love;
Yes, thou shalt know—spite of thy past distress
And all those ills which thou so long hast mourned—
Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned,
Nor hell a fury like a woman scorned!

ACT II

ALMERIA *is wandering with her maid in the burial vaults, looking for the tomb in which* KING ANSELMO *has been buried.*

ALMERIA: How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arched and ponderous roof,
By its own weight made steadfast and immovable,
Looking tranquillity! It strikes an awe
And terror on my aching sight; the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.
No, I will on! Show me Anselmo's tomb,
Where I may kneel and pay my vows again
To him, to Heaven, and my Alphonso's soul.

[ALPHONSO *looks up from his father's tomb.*

ALPHONSO: Who calls that wretched thing that was Alphonso?

ALMERIA: O take me to thy arms, and bear me hence,
Back to the bottom of the boundless deep,
To seas beneath, where thou so long hast dwelt!
O, how hast thou returned? How hast thou charmed
The wildness of the waves and rocks to this,
That thus relenting, they have given thee back
To earth, to light and life, to love and me?

ALPHONSO: How shall I welcome thee to this sad place?

ALMERIA (*clasping him*): Thus, thus! We parted, thus to meet again!

[*As they are talking,* ZARA *appears.*

ZARA: Who is there?

ALPHONSO: We are lost! Undone! Discovered!
Retire, my love! (*Aloud to* ALMERIA *as she departs*) This kindness to a prisoner,
Heaven will repay to you.

ZARA (*aside*): O base dissembler!
(*Aloud*) You're grown a favourite since we parted!

ALPHONSO: Madam?

ZARA: I did not know the princess's favourite;
Your pardon, sir. I came to set you free,
But now I shall return much better pleased,
To find you have an interest superior.

ALPHONSO: You mock my miseries?

ZARA: What miseries?
Who would not thus be happily confined;
And have contending queens at dead of night,
Forsake their bed, and watch with weeping eyes
Your slumbers. Villain, thou shalt die!
For now I know for whom thou'st live.

ALPHONSO: You know for whom then I would die.

[*A band of armed men rush in; they are Valencians who have come to rescue their prince.*

ZARA (*mistaking them for* KING MANUEL'S *soldiers*):
Wait! Wait!
Wait till I see the king! He must not die.
[*She hastens away, and the Valencians release their prince.*
ALPHONSO: That woman has a soul of God-like mould,
And passions which outstrip the wind, and tear
Her virtues up, as tempests root the sea.
Now lead me, friends, unto our gallant troops,
And by a swift surprise we'll storm the town.
[*As they depart,* KING MANUEL *enters in a great rage; he is disguised as a Moor.*
MANUEL: Perfidious Zara! And accurst Almeria!
Both of them leagued against me with Alphonso.
Forgive him? Yes, when I have found and killed him
With my own hands! He's gone. My guards have slain him,
As Zara said they would! And now, false queen,
I'll catch you in the act of trickery.
[*Crouching down in the deep shadow, at the spot where* ALPHONSO *was bound and fettered, he waits for her approach, saying:*
When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand,
Sudden I'll start, and dash her with her guilt.
But here she comes. That is her stealthy footfall.
[*It is, however,* GARCIA'S, *and he creeps along with a dagger in his hand: then, while the* KING *is pretending to sleep, he feels for his body, and stabs him through and through.*
GARCIA: That's done, and now I'll go and tell the king
That I have killed his enemy, Alphonso.
Now I can wed Almeria, and become
Heir to Granada and Valencia;
[*After he has gone,* ZARA *returns, carrying two bowls of poison. Finding the body of the dead* KING *in the darkness she mistakes it for* ALPHONSO.

ZARA: O that accurst and base and treacherous king!
Has he killed thee already, my Alphonso?
I came prepared to give thee death, and die
Beside thee, in a gentler way than this.
[*She drinks one of the poisoned bowls, saying:*
Hover a moment yet, thou gentle spirit,
Soul of my love, and I will wait thy flight!
Cold, cold! my veins are icicles and frost.
I'll creep into his bosom, and die there.

[*She dies with her arms around the dead* KING, *covering him so that only his Moorish dress is seen, when* ALMERIA *comes along holding a faint taper.*

ALMERIA: Is it at last then so? Is he then dead?
Ah, she has killed him, and then taken poison!
Why did she bring two bowls and drink but one?
Ha! this was left for me, and I will drink it.

[*But as she raises the bowl to her lips,* ALPHONSO *rushes in with a band of soldiers carrying lighted torches. At the sight of her husband* ALMERIA *faints.*

ALPHONSO: Forbear; my arms alone shall hold her up,
Warm her to life, and wake her into gladness.

ALMERIA: Where am I? Heaven! What does this dream intend?

ALPHONSO: O mayst thou never dream of less delight,
Nor ever wake to less substantial joys!

ALMERIA: Given me again from death! O all ye powers
Confirm this miracle! I've been abused
With apparitions and affrighting phantoms;
This is my lord, my life, my only husband;
I have him now, and we no more will part.
My father, too, shall have compassion—

ALPHONSO: O my heart's comfort! 'Tis not given to this
Frail life to be entirely blessed. Even now
Thy father fell, where he designed my death.

Seest thou how just the hand of Heaven has been?
Let us, who through our innocence survive,
Still in paths of honour persevere,
For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And, though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

The Way of the World

Persons in the Drama

EDWARD MIRABELL
WAITWELL, *his servant*
SIR WILFULL WITFORD
FAINALL
LADY WISHFORT
MRS. FAINALL, *her daughter*
MILLAMANT, *her niece and ward*
FOIBLE, *her maid*
A MAID

ACT I

EDWARD MIRABELL, *a man of wit and fashion, has brought his friend,* MRS. FAINALL, *to Rosamond's Pond in St. James's Park for a quiet talk. It is not a place one generally chooses for this purpose at noon on a summer's day, but* MIRABELL *is in love with* MILLAMANT, *the brilliant niece and ward of* MRS. FAINALL'S *mother,* LADY WISHFORT, *and* MILLAMANT *follows the fashion, and comes at this time every day to the pond to take the air.*

MRS. FAINALL: So, to conceal your love for Millamant, you paid sham addresses to my mother! And you

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In 1698, Jeremy Collier, a clergyman of the High Church School, published an attack on the playwrights of the day, in which the work of Congreve was severely handled. Congreve had undoubtedly laid himself open to reproof, but instead of taking it in good part, he wrote one more play, "The Way of the World," which failed. Congreve told his audience that they

thought by that to win her consent to the match! Now you've been found out, my mother will never receive you.

MIRABELL: I called on Lady Wishfort yesterday. She broke out into one of her long invectives, and Millamant took her side.

MRS. FAINALL: But you don't resent what Millamant said, surely? She only spoke in compliance with my mother's angry whim. Half her fortune, you must remember, depends on her marrying with my mother's approbation.

MIRABELL: I know that. That is why I began those unfortunate advances to Lady Wishfort.

MRS. FAINALL: She talked last night of endeavouring a match between Millamant and your uncle, Sir Rowland.

MIRABELL: Ha! So the plot works. What would you say, my dear friend, if Sir Rowland turned his attention from the niece, and paid his addresses to the aunt?

MRS. FAINALL: What new mischief are you at?

MIRABELL: I shall transform my servant Waitwell into a rich and amorous uncle. As you see, I have invented his name, Sir Rowland, and your mother has already got to hear of him.

MRS. FAINALL: I can guess whom you made use of. My mother's maid, Foible. So you have won her to your interest.

MIRABELL: She is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning. I would not tempt Waitwell to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, should consent to marry my uncle,

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need not take the trouble to disapprove, as he had no further intention of writing for the stage. As a fact, he never expected any measure of popular success for the play, knowing full well that it was unsuited to the prevailing taste. In time, the piece succeeded better, but nothing could shake Congreve's determination of abandoning his career. "The Way of the World," however, is as brilliant as anything that ever emanated from Congreve's pen. The dialogue, especially, has rarely been equalled, and Millamant, the central character, is, as George Meredith said, an admirable, almost a lovable woman.

he might stand upon terms. So I made him sure beforehand.

MRS. FAINALL: I believe my poor mother will do anything to get a husband, but when she has got the one you are providing for her, she will submit to anything to be rid of him.

MIRABELL: Yes, I think the good lady would marry anything that resembled a man, and if Waitwell can catch her in a contract, I will release her on her giving her consent to my marriage with Millamant.

MRS. FAINALL: Here is your lady.

[*Enter* MILLAMANT *and others.*

MILLAMANT: Mirabell, were you upset last night? Oh yes, and went away. Now I think of it I'm angry—no, I'm pleased—for I believe I gave you some pain.

MIRABELL: You pretend to a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the art of pleasing.

MILLAMANT: I ask your pardon for that. When one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

MIRABELL: Suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover—and then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true; you are no longer handsome when you've lost your lover; for beauty is the lover's gift. Flatter an ugly woman, and she will find something beautiful in herself when she turns to her looking-glass, for the looking-glass reflects our praises rather than our face.

MILLAMANT: Oh, the vanity of these men! If they did not praise us, none of us would be beautiful.

MIRABELL: You had the tyranny to deny me last night, though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concerned my love. And you are always surrounded by a herd of fools.

MILLAMANT: Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom, you'll displease me. I think I must resolve not

to have you. No, I won't have you, Mirabell—you may go. Ha, ha, ha! What would you give to help loving me?

MIRABELL: I would give something for you not to know I could help it. A man may as soon make a fortune by his honesty as win a woman with plain-dealing and sincerity. Can't you stay one minute——

MILLAMANT: To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot like to speed? No!

MIRABELL: How came you to know it?

MILLAMANT: When you've done thinking of me, think of that. [*She rushes off.*

MIRABELL: Think of you? To think of a whirlwind in the midst of a whirlwind were tranquillity compared with it. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and still persevere in playing the fool by the force of instinct.

ACT II

A room in LADY WISHFORT'S *house.* LADY WISHFORT *is busy at her toilet, with a maid waiting on her.*

LADY WISHFORT: No news of Foible yet? Hang me, if I have not fretted myself till I am pale again. Fetch me the red—the red. Wench, why don't you fetch me the red?

MAID: Does your ladyship mean the red cherry-brandy?

LADY WISHFORT: No, fool, no! Paint, paint, red paint! Don't you understand, idiot? Why don't you move, you wooden thing on wires?

MAID: Your ladyship is so impatient! I cannot come at the paint. Mrs. Foible has locked it up and carried the key with her. Oh, here she is, your ladyship.

[FOIBLE *enters.*

LADY WISHFORT: Foible, where have you been? What have you done?

FOIBLE: Nay, 'tis your ladyship has done, and are to do. I have only promised. A man so enamoured—so transported. Here is your miniature, all that is left of it—all that is not kissed away. Well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin—poor Sir Rowland!

LADY WISHFORT: The miniature is much like me. But look, Foible, haven't I disturbed my face?

FOIBLE: A little art once made your picture like you, and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must now sit for you, madam. I will get the paint.

LADY WISHFORT (*as* FOIBLE *is making her up*): No, that's too scornful. You see the picture has a sort of a swimmingness in the eye. That's how I'll look. Millamant has got it, too. But her features are not good. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Remove my toilet—I'll dress above, and receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome? Don't answer me. I won't know. I'll be taken by surprise.

FOIBLE: By storm, madam. Sir Rowland is a brisk man.

LADY WISHFORT: Is he? I'm glad I shall not have to make advances, as I did to his wretched nephew, Mirabell. Oh, I would like to poison that wretch!

FOIBLE: Starve him, madam, starve him. Marry Sir Rowland and get him disinherited.

LADY WISHFORT: I'll be contracted to-night, and married to-morrow. And, as for Millamant, she shall at once be betrothed to my nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwood, who has come up from Shropshire this afternoon. Remove my toilet at once, good Foible.

[*She goes upstairs, and* MRS. FAINALL *enters the room without noticing the man creeping after her. It is* FAINALL, *her villainous husband; he hides behind a screen.*

MRS. FAINALL: Oh, Foible, I have been in a fright lest I should come too late! My rascal of a husband has

seen you with Waitwell and Mirabell, and I am afraid he will tell Lady Wishfort.

FOIBLE: Tell what, madam?

MRS. FAINALL: Don't put on that strange face. I am in the plot, and know that Waitwell, whom you married this morning, is to personate Sir Rowland, and help Mirabell to win Millamant.

FOIBLE: Oh, dear madam, I beg your pardon! Now I can safely tell your ladyship our success. Your mother is so angry with Mirabell that she vows she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, and married to him to-morrow. I warrant I worked her up so that he may have her for the asking.

MRS. FAINALL: Oh, rare Foible! I'll come with you up the back stairs, lest I should meet my husband.

[*They go out, and* FAINALL *comes from behind the screen.*

FAINALL: So you want to avoid me? Now I have all the threads of this pretty plot in my hands, I shall involve you in such a scandal, madam, that your mother will be put to it to save your reputation as well as her own. Hang me if I don't get hold of your fortune at last! What else did I marry you for, I should like to know?

ACT III

It is now evening. LADY WISHFORT *is walking impatiently up and down her drawing-room, and her woman,* FOIBLE, *is drawing the blinds.*

LADY WISHFORT: Is everything in order for the reception of Sir Rowland?

FOIBLE: Everything is ready, madam. Hark! There's the coach.

LADY WISHFORT: 'Tis Sir Rowland. Where is my nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwood, and where is my niece, Millamant? I must have them contracted to-night and married to-morrow, the same as Sir Rowland and I.

FOIBLE: Sir Wilfull has only just come, madam. He is drinking in the parlour, and Miss Millamant is up in her room.

LADY WISHFORT: I must bring them together at once. Call her down, Foible, and I'll go and send Sir Wilfull in. Then, while he is paying his addresses, I will receive Sir Rowland in the dining-room. There are too many lights here.

[LADY WISHFORT *goes out, and* MILLAMANT *and* MRS. FAINALL *enter.*

FOIBLE: Miss Millamant, Mr. Mirabell has been waiting this half hour for a talk with you, but my lady has now gone to get Sir Wilfull to pay his addresses to you. Shall I send Mr. Mirabell away?

MILLAMANT: Just as you will, dear Foible—send him away or send him in here. I think I'll see him—shall I? Let the wretch come. Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull; you are married, and know how to suffer a fool gladly.

[SIR WILFULL, *a rough, hard-drinking country squire, appears in the doorway looking extremely disconcerted; he is much relieved when* MRS. FAINALL *joins him, and leads him out of the room just as* MIRABELL *comes in.*

MIRABELL (*shutting the door*): Here the chase must end. You can fly no further.

MILLAMANT: Vanity! I'll fly, and be followed to the last moment. Though I am on the very verge of matrimony, I'll be solicited to the very last—nay, and afterwards!

MIRABELL: When favours have always to be solicited, the giver loses the grace and the receiver the pleasure.

MILLAMANT: In common things, perhaps, but never in love. I hate a lover that dares to think he can draw a moment's air independent of the bounty of his mistress. Ah, I shall never marry! My dear liberty, shall I leave thee? My morning thoughts, my agreeable wakings, my

indolent slumbers, must I bid you farewell? I can't do it. Mirabell, I shall lie abed at morning as long as I please, and I won't be called names after I'm married—I won't be called names!

MIRABELL: Names?

MILLAMANT: Dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of it! Mirabell, don't let us keep kissing before other people; let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while, and as well-bred as if we were not married at all.

MIRABELL: Agreed! Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract? Here comes a witness to the sealing of the deed. [MRS. FAINALL *enters.*

MILLAMANT: Fainall, what shall I do? Shall I have him? Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you. No! I won't be kissed—here, kiss my hand, then. Now go.

MRS. FAINALL: You must go, Mirabell. My mother is coming down with Sir Rowland, who seems in a fair way to succeed. Spare your ecstasies for another occasion, and slip down the back stairs. Quick—here they come!

[MIRABELL *flies, and* MILLAMANT *and* MRS. FAINALL *follow him.* LADY WISHFORT *comes in, leaning on the arm of* WAITWELL, *who is disguised as* SIR ROWLAND.

LADY WISHFORT: You have an access of gallantry, Sir Rowland, and press things to a conclusion with a most prevailing vehemence. Just a day or two for decency of marriage.

WAITWELL: For decency of funeral, madam. The delay will break my heart, and my nephew, Mirabell, will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me. Marry me at once, and I will disinherit that unnatural viper!

LADY WISHFORT: Oh, if you knew what a perfidious wretch your nephew is! He has even tried to make love to me!

WAITWELL: Love to you? Then the villain is my rival. He shall die!

LADY WISHFORT: You have an excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland; he is not worth it. Marry me, disinherit him, let him starve to death.

[*A maid enters with a letter.*

WAITWELL: Ha, a man's handwriting! Mirabell's, I swear, or somebody's whose throat must be cut!

LADY WISHFORT (*opening the letter, which comes from* FAINALL, *although he does not sign it*): Nay, Sir Rowland, but I'm pleased with your jealousy; it is a proof of your passion. We'll open the letter together—(*reads*): "Madam, though unknown to you"—see, it is from no one I know—"I think myself obliged to inform you that you are abused. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland is a rascal—" Heavens! What's this?

WAITWELL: Let me see—let me see!—(*reads*): "A rascal, disguised and suborned for this imposture by the contrivance of——"

LADY WISHFORT: I shall faint, I shall die! Oh——

WAITWELL: The wretch, the villain! Madam, don't you see it?

LADY WISHFORT: Too well—too well! I have seen too much.

WAITWELL: I thought I knew the hand-writing. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him!

LADY WISHFORT: Mirabell! I fancied I saw the scoundrel leave this room with Millamant just as we entered it. But don't fight, Sir Rowland—don't fight! Consider my reputation. I'll go and examine my niece. I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love for me, not to fight. If you were killed I should never show my face again!

WAITWELL: Madam, I obey. But I must give you some proof. I'll go for the black box which contains the deeds of my whole estate, and bring the marriage contract.

LADY WISHFORT: Bring what you will, but come alive, pray come alive! Oh, this is a happy discovery!

[*They go out.*

ACT IV

The same room in LADY WISHFORT'S *house at night-time. As* LADY WISHFORT *is sitting in a chair, rocking herself to and fro, her face covered in her hands,* FOIBLE *enters.*

LADY WISHFORT: Out of my house—out of my house! You viper, you treacherous trull! What! You would marry me to a cast-serving man, you wretch that I raised from nothing!

FOIBLE: Oh, pardon me, madam, pardon me, and I'll confess all! If you only knew how Mr. Mirabell wheedled me.

LADY WISHFORT: I'll wheedle you, you hussy. Waitwell's already in prison, and you shall be chained beside him, if there is a constable in this parish. I'll see Fainall about it.

[*She rushes out in a wild rage as* MRS. FAINALL *enters.*

MRS. FAINALL: Have a good heart, Foible. Mirabell has bailed Waitwell out. It is all my husband's doing. He was behind the screen, and overheard what you said before dinner. Now the villain threatens to destroy my reputation as well as my mother's. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort. How now, Millamant?

MILLAMANT (*running into the room*): Hide yourself somewhere, Foible, until my old lady's anger has abated. She is in a perilous passion at something Mr. Fainall has just said. There is a fearful hurricane. He wants every bit of money made over to him. Here they come. Where is Mirabell?

[*They all leave the room,* LADY WISHFORT *and* FAINALL *enter.*

FAINALL: I am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life, on condition you agree never to marry!

LADY WISHFORT: Never to marry?

FAINALL: No more Sir Rowlands; the next impostor may not be so timely detected. Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune, and depend entirely for her maintenance on my discretion.

LADY WISHFORT: But, oh——

FAINALL: I come to make demands; I'll hear no objections. But, lastly, I require, in my wife's name, the six thousand pounds of Miss Millamant's fortune, which she has forfeited by contracting herself to Mirabell against your consent and knowledge.

LADY WISHFORT: You blood-sucking leech! I've a mind rather to endure the scandal.

FAINALL: I leave that to your consideration while I go for the deeds which I am having drawn up with all possible speed. If you won't sign them, you and your daughter shall be the talk of the town. I won't leave either of you a shred of reputation. [*He goes out.*

LADY WISHFORT: Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Must I be subject to this merciless villain? 'Twas against my consent that Arabella married him. Ah! her first husband, Mr. Languish, would not have carried it thus. That was my choice; this is hers. Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues.

[MILLAMANT *and* SIR WILFULL WITWOOD *enter.*

SIR WILFULL: To pleasure you, aunt, I'm willing to marry my cousin. She and I are agreed upon the matter.

MILLAMANT: To convince you that I had no hand in the plot, I have obliged Mirabell to make a resignation, in your ladyship's presence, of the contract that passed between us. He is now outside, waiting your leave for admittance.

LADY WISHFORT: swear I am comforted by this

testimony of your obedience; but I cannot admit that traitor.

SIR WILFULL: If you disoblige him, he may insist upon the contract. S'heart, I'll call him in.

[*He goes to the door and "hems," and* MIRABELL *enters.*

MIRABELL (*to* LADY WISHFORT): Ah, madam, there was a time—but let it be forgotten! I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held of sighing at your feet. But it was an innocent device, though, I confess, it had a face of guiltiness. It was at most an artifice which love contrived; and errors which love produces have ever been accounted venial.

LADY WISHFORT: Well, sir, I will stifle my just resentment on condition you resign the contract with my niece immediately.

MIRABELL: It is in writing, and I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

LADY WISHFORT (*aside*): Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue! [FAINALL *enters.*

FAINALL: Here is the deed; are you prepared to sign?

LADY WISHFORT: I am not able to part with Millamant's fortune. She has now a lawful claim to it, having matched herself with my consent to Sir Wilfull.

FAINALL: That sham is too gross to pass on me. I insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your whole estate to my management, and make over my wife's fortune to my use.

LADY WISHFORT: Ungrateful wretch! Haven't you been living on my daughter ever since you married her?

FAINALL: I'll answer you when I have the rest of her money in my possession.

MIRABELL: Lady Wishfort, I own I have not deserved you should owe any obligation to me; else perhaps I could advise——

LADY WISHFORT: Oh, what? What? Save me and my child from ruin, and I'll forgive all that's past!

Harkee, I'll break the match. You shall have my niece yet and all her fortune, if you can but help me!

MIRABELL: I'll take you at your word.

[*Going to the door, he brings in* MRS. FAINALL, *and then* WAITWELL, *who carries a deed-box.*

LADY WISHFORT: Oh, Sir Rowland! Well, rascal?

WAITWELL: I have brought the black box at last, madam.

MIRABELL: Give it me. Madam, you remember your promise?

LADY WISHFORT: Ay, dear sir.

FAINALL: S'death, what's this to me? I'll not wait your private concerns.

MIRABELL (*undoing the box*): Mr. Fainall, it is now time that you should know that your lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune——

FAINALL: Pretended settlement!

MIRABELL: Yes, sir! I say that this lady, while still a widow, having received some cautions respecting your tyranny of temper, which, from her own fondness for you, she would never have suspected—she did, I say by the advice of friends, deliver this deed to me in trust. You may read if you please (*holding out the parchment*), though perhaps what is written on the back may serve your occasion?

FAINALL: Very likely, sir. What's here? (*reads*)—"A Deed of Conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust to Edward Mirabell." Confusion!

MIRABELL: Even so, sir; 'tis the Way of the World, sir; of the widows of the world.

FAINALL: Mirabell, you shall hear of this, sir! Let me pass, oaf! [*He rushes out.*

LADY WISHFORT: Oh, daughter, daughter! 'tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence!

MRS. FAINALL: Thank Mr. Mirabell, to whose advice all is owing.

LADY WISHFORT: Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise—and I must perform mine. First, I pardon, for your sake, Sir Rowland there, and Foible; the next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and, how to do that——

MIRABELL: For that, madam, give yourself no trouble; let me have your consent. Sir Wilfull is my friend, he has had compassion upon lovers, and has generously engaged in this action for our service; and now designs to prosecute his travels.

SIR WILFULL: S'heart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another; my resolution is to see foreign parts.

LADY WISHFORT: Well, sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

MILLAMANT: Why does not the man take me? Would you have me give myself to you over again?

MIRABELL: Ay, and over and over again! (*Kisses her hand.*) I would have you as often as I possibly can. Well, Heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear!

LADY WISHFORT: As I am a person, I can hold out no longer. I have wasted my spirits so to-day already that I am ready to sink under the fatigue; and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course.

MIRABELL: Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account; to my knowledge, his circumstances are such he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lies to a reunion; in the meantime, madam (*to* MRS. FAINALL), let me before these witnesses restore to you this deed of trust; it may be a means to make you live easily together.

PIERRE CORNEILLE

The Cid

Persons in the Drama

FERNANDO, *king of Castile*
DON RODERIC, *lover of Chimène*
DON SANCHO, *his rival*
DON DIEGO, *father of Roderic*
COUNT GOMEZ, *captain of Castile*
CHIMÈNE, *his daughter*
ELVIRA, *her companion*

ACT I

DON DIEGO *and* COUNT GOMEZ *meet on the steps of* FERNANDO'S *palace at Seville.*

COUNT GOMEZ: At last, then, you have beaten me, and seized
The highest post of honour. Though your arm

Pierre Corneille, born at Rouen on June 6, 1606, was ten years old when Shakespeare died. The English drama was in a sad state of decline when the Norman dramatist began to write for the French stage. At the age of thirty—in 1636—Corneille produced "The Cid," and thereby wrested from the hands of Massinger and Shirley the torch of dramatic art, and endowed France with that superiority in the art of playwriting which she has now held for t o hundred and seventy years. Corneille had something to teach that everybody could learn: regularity of construction, clearness, and plainness of speech. The situation in "The Cid" is extraordinarily well defined; the hero, Roderic, is divided between his love for Chimène and his duty of avenging on her father an insult done to his own parent. The heroine, Chimène, on the other hand, struggles between her love for Roderic and her duty of taking vengeance on him for the death of her father. It is almost a geometrical proposition; but Corneille breathes fire and life into it by imparting to his characters his own fierce, high sense of honour and duty, and his inflexibility of purpose. He died in Paris on October 1, 1684. This epitome has been prepared from the French text.

Is now so weak you dare not take the field,
You have been made the governor of the prince.
It was an honour due alone to me.

DON DIEGO: Have I not earned it by the feats of arms
Done in the days when you, a stripling, rode
Behind me, while I broke the Moorish front
In victory after victory?

COUNT GOMEZ: Then you were
Worthy to teach our prince the arts of war.
But now that I am Captain of Castile,
The prince should be with me.

DON DIEGO: There is a way
To end our quarrel. Gomez, oft we rode
Like sire and son together; let us now
Unite our honours, names, and dignities
In marriage. We have both an only child;
Let Roderic, my son, and sweet Chimène,
Your daughter, whom we always meant to wed,
Lovingly settle this dispute.

COUNT GOMEZ (*scornfully*): Chimène
No longer dare aspire to be the wife
Of Roderic; the father now is raised
Too high in power and honour for the son
To stoop to wed the daughter of a count.

DON DIEGO: They love each other, Gomez; do not break
Two young and noble hearts.

COUNT GOMEZ: You wish to steal
My daughter from me, as you stole the post
To which I was entitled?

DON DIEGO: Our good king
Gave me the governorship as a reward
For my past services.

COUNT GOMEZ: You carried it
By flattery and intrigue at the court,
While I was fighting for it honestly
Upon the battlefield.

DON DIEGO: Had you deserved it,
The king had given you the governorship.
You lost it through your want of merit, sir.
COUNT GOMEZ: I? Through my want of merit? I?
DON DIEGO: Ay, you!
COUNT GOMEZ: You impudent and miserable old fool!
[*He strikes him fiercely on the face.*
DON DIEGO (*drawing his sword*): Now crown your insult on a weak old man
By killing him.
COUNT GOMEZ (*disarming him at a blow*):
You must not use a sword,
Or you might hurt yourself. Go, teach the prince
The arts of fence in which you have such skill.
[*He strides away.*
DON DIEGO: Have I grown grey in honourable wars
To end at last like this? Not once or twice
This arm of mine has saved the land of Spain;
But now at last it fails me, and I go
Down to the grave dishonoured. Ha, my son!
[RODERIC *enters.*
Roderic, are you a coward?
RODERIC: Any man,
Save you, my father, would not ask me twice.
DON DIEGO: Avenge me, then, avenge me!
RODERIC: Who has dared—
DON DIEGO: An enemy has struck me on the face.
Look how I bleed! I tried to draw on him,
But he disarmed me. I am now too old,
Too feeble, too infirm to wear this sword.
Take it. Blood only can wipe out the stain
Upon my honour. Die or kill! Your foe
Is worthy of you, Roderic. . . .
RODERIC: His name?
DON DIEGO: Don Gomez.
RODERIC: Heavens! the father of Chimène!
DON DIEGO: Answer me not, but act.

Dear is the man to you, and his offence
Is therefore greater. Put your love aside;
Bone of my bone you are. I gave you life.
Now prove yourself my son. I say no more.
Avenge me, oh, avenge me! Go! Run! Fly!
[DON DIEGO *departs.*

RODERIC: Lost! Lost! For ever lost! Oh, my Chimène,
Your love will change to hatred if I live;
Your joy will turn to sorrow if I die!
Would I were dead already; dead to love,
And dead to honour! Ah! our love is dead—
Dead from the blow that struck my father down—
Honour alone remains, and I must strive
To keep the honour of my race alive.
[COUNT GOMEZ *returns.*
Do you know
My father Don Diego?

COUNT GOMEZ: Yes.

RODERIC: A man
Now worn with age, who in his prime of life
Could kill, as easily as lads kill flies,
Cowards like you.

COUNT GOMEZ: Away, boy!

RODERIC: Even a boy
Can fight a coward who attacks old men.

COUNT GOMEZ: You challenge me? Child! Put that long sword down.
You are too young to carry arms. The man
Who fought with you would be a murderer;
You are too young.

RODERIC: Won't you disarm me then,
As you disarmed my father? (*attacking him furiously*)
Come, now, come!
Glory of Spain, and terror of the Moors,
Teach me that lesson in the art of fence
You taught my father! What! Do you give way?

COUNT GOMEZ (*staggering under the fierce and sudden attack*): Well done, boy! You are brave as well as bold,
And in your swordsmanship you show a skill
Beyond all expectation. I repent
Of breaking your engagement with Chimène,
For you are worthy of my daughter's hand.
In a few years, when my strong arm grows weak,
You will become the champion of Spain.

RODERIC: Will that wipe from my father's bowed white head
The blood that you have shed there, and the shame
And infamy of that foul blow you struck?

[*He attacks him again with still wilder fury; drives him against the wall, and kills him.*

ACT II

ELVIRA *has come to comfort* CHIMÈNE *as she is sadly waiting in the hall of* COUNT GOMEZ'S *mansion.* RODERIC *enters.*

ELVIRA: Roderic, what have you done? What! Do you seek
Here, in the house that you have filled with grief,
A refuge from the anger of the king?
Fly for your life! Who will now guard Seville
Against the Moorish power? Fly for your life;
Chimène is coming: she has seen the king,
And prayed him to avenge her.

RODERIC: If Chimène
Seeks an avenger of her father's blood,
I, Roderic, her lover and her friend,
Will kill the man. She need not ask the king.

ELVIRA: Chimène is not alone. Your crime has given
Don Sancho, your old rival, hope again.
Oh, hide yourself, Don Roderic! Here he comes.

[CHIMÈNE *enters with* DON SANCHO.

DON SANCHO: Chimène! My heart, my life, my sword are yours.
If you will use them, he shall die to-night!

CHIMÈNE: I am unhappy! Oh, I am unhappy!

DON SANCHO: Let me avenge you.

CHIMÈNE: No. Not yet. I must wait.

DON SANCHO: Ah! Justice walks with slow and doubtful step,
And, being blind, she cannot always see
Felons that hold high places at the court.
The sword is swift and sure. Let me avenge you.

CHIMÈNE: No, I must wait; but, if the king should fail,
Don Sancho, I will turn to you for aid.

DON SANCHO: I thank you, madam. I am well content. [*He departs.*

CHIMÈNE: I love him still, Elvira; if he dies
I shall not live.

ELVIRA: So you will pardon him?

CHIMÈNE: Pardon him? What! My father's murderer?
Never! Have I no honour? Would a slave
Open her arms unto a man who came
Drenched in her father's blood?

ELVIRA: What will you do?

CHIMÈNE: Pursue him, kill him, and then die with him.

RODERIC (*springing from behind the curtain*):
There is no need to hound me down. I come
Prepared to die.

CHIMÈNE: Roderic in my house?
Elvira, is it Roderic? My heart breaks.

[*She falls to the ground in a swoon; when she recovers,* RODERIC *is bending over her.*

CHIMÈNE: Go; let me die in peace.

RODERIC: No, kill me first. Here is my sword.

CHIMÈNE (*staggering to her feet*): Wet with my father's blood!
For God's sake, hide it, hide the dreadful thing.
RODERIC: If that which I have done were still to do,
I still would do it; for I could not live
And see my father go down to the grave
Dishonoured and despised and unavenged.
But now that I have paid the debt I owe
To him that gave me life, I am prepared
To pay my debt to you, who gave me love.
Let no one come between us. Here I stand
Ready to fall upon my sword, and die,
Oh, my Chimène, under your angry eyes.
CHIMÈNE: No, no! I do not hate you.
RODERIC: I must die!
Do you not fear dishonour more than death?
Can you not hear the whisper of scandalous tongues—
"He killed her father, but she lets him live;
That shows she loves him still." No! I must die.
CHIMÈNE: I do not care who knows I love you still.
Ah, think not I forgive you, Roderic,
Because I will not let you kill yourself
Before my eyes. I wait for King Fernando
To judge you; and when judgment once is given,
I will not move a hand to stay its course.
Now go.
RODERIC: Yea, to my death.
CHIMÈNE: Oh, Roderic!
In spite of all, I would not have you die.
RODERIC: Oh, miracle of love!
CHIMÈNE: Oh, height of grief!
RODERIC: What sorrows have our fathers given us!
CHIMÈNE: Ah, who could have foreseen . . .
RODERIC: Who could have dreamt . . .
CHIMÈNE: Our love would end like this . . .
RODERIC: In mortal woe!
CHIMÈNE: Go, go! No more!

RODERIC: Farewell, farewell, Chimène!
My life is in your hands; one thing I crave—Death!
CHIMÈNE: We shall be united in the grave.
[RODERIC *sadly departs, and* CHIMÈNE *falls to weeping.*

ACT III

The faint, chill light of dawn is coming through the windows of the hall of audience in KING FERNANDO'S *palace, which is filled with armed men; a great shout goes up from them as the king enters with* RODERIC.

FERNANDO: Ah! how can I reward you, Roderic,
For this night's work? Nothing have I to give,
Proportionate to your merit. At a blow
You have restored my falling power, and raised
Spain from the dust and trampled down her foes.
I heard your prisoners, the two Moorish kings,
Call you, with humble and admiring eyes,
Their "Cid," which in their language means their lord.
"The Cid" henceforward shall you be, a name
Terrible to every Moor, and prosperous
To every Christian warrior in Spain.
RODERIC: Your praises, sire, fill me with grief and shame,
It was not victory that I sought last night,
But death; for I had lost Chimène, and lost
Your favour, and the people hated me
For slaying, when Seville was compassed round
With enemies, the Captain of Castile.
FERNANDO: Speak not of that; all memory of your crime
Is washed away in Moorish blood. And now,
Tell me about the battle.
RODERIC: When the fleet
Of Moorish ships was seen, and men began
Pouring along our streets in panic flight,

I saw they wanted leading; soon some friends
Gathered around me, and we marched abreast,
Collecting fugitives, and at the port
We formed an army of three thousand men.
Two thousand troops I hid in ships; the rest
Threw themselves flat upon the earth. No sound,
No light, no movement on the ships or shore,
Warned the invaders of our ambuscade;
And, thinking to surprise a sleeping town,
They anchored silently, and trooped on land
In wild disorder. Like a thunder-bolt
Out of a calm, clear sky, we fell on them.
Before they knew a battle had begun
They were defeated, broken, crushed; their kings
Fell in our hands; their ships drew off and dawn
Flamed on our river reddened with their blood.

A MESSENGER: Your majesty, Chimène has come to ask
Your sentence on her father's murderer.

FERNANDO: Oh, how inopportunely she arrives!
It is not yet clear day; she will not wait
An hour for her revenge. Go, Roderic,
And let me plead your cause.

[RODERIC *goes out by a side door;* CHIMÈNE *enters.*

CHIMÈNE: Justice, O King!
Justice upon my father's murderer!

FERNANDO: There is no need to ask me now, Chimène,
For justice. Roderic is dead. He died
Fighting last night against the Moorish host.
Heaven has avenged you without mortal aid.
What! you grow pale?

CHIMÈNE (*with a wild shriek*): Oh, Heaven! is Roderic dead?

FERNANDO: Chimène, you love him, deny it not. Your face,
Your speech, your movements show it. Roderic,
Our hero, and our glory and our chief,

Lives. Has no rumour of his mighty deeds
Reached you?

CHIMÈNE: Alas, it has! It was not love,
But outraged honour and offended pride
That made me tremble and grow pale, to hear
The false news that you gave me. For I grieved
Don Roderic should escape from the base death
That he deserves, and on a battlefield
Gloriously end, and leave me unavenged.
Now, now I have him! Crowned with victory,
Famous, triumphant, and magnificent,
Worthy at last of being sacrificed
Unto the murdered champion of Spain.
I will not ask for justice any more
From you, O King Fernando! I appeal
Against you, to the chivalry of Spain.

[*She turns her wild eyes from the astonished* KING, *and speaks to the crowd of armed men that surround him.*

Vengeance! I ask for vengeance! Are you men?
Then out with all your swords, and help a maid
Outraged and friendless. On each one of you
I lay the obligation. Fight for me,
Fight against Roderic, and I will give
Myself in marriage to the man who brings
News of his death, and hands to me the sword
That killed my father.

FERNANDO: Hold! I will not let
This ancient custom of barbaric days,
To which Chimène appeals, now go unchanged.
To set a thousand men against one man,
Who killed his adversary in fair fight,
Is most unjust. The custom must be changed;
Chimène can have one champion if she will,
But only one.

SANCHO (*springing forward*): Chimène, will you accept

The sword I offered you last night?
CHIMÈNE: I will.
FERNANDO: Then call in Roderic. And now, Chimène,
Go home, and wait the issue of the fight.
Whoever wins, Sancho or Roderic,
Shall marry you, and I will come myself,
And bring the victor to his lovely prize.
CHIMÈNE: What! Must I wed my father's murderer,
If he should slay my champion?
FERNANDO: Yes, you must,
For I am sure you love him still, Chimène.
[*She departs;* RODERIC *enters, and the two rivals follow the* KING *into the courtyard of the palace, where the duel is to take place.*

ACT IV

As CHIMÈNE *is sitting in the hall of her mansion, waiting with intense anxiety,* DON SANCHO *enters with a hesitating step, holding a naked sword by the point.*

SANCHO: Madam, I come to lay at your fair feet
This sword . . .
CHIMÈNE: Wet with the blood of Roderic!
You murderous villain! Do you think I meant
To marry you? You! who have killed a man
I love to madness? Roderic, I come!
My father now is satisfied. My love,
One grave shall hold us, and all men shall know
The passion I have hidden.
SANCHO: You mistake . . .
CHIMÈNE: Go, go, I tell you, execrable wretch!
By what foul trick did you bring down a man
Who could have killed a hundred louts like you?
No, no! I will not listen. You vile assassin!
You, an avenger?
SANCHO (*trying to wrest the sword from her*): Oh Chimène, Chimène!

Listen to me. You must not kill yourself.
You are mistaken.

CHIMÈNE: Oh, oh! Roderic!
He will not let me come to you.

[KING FERNANDO *enters with* DON DIEGO *and other noblemen.*

FERNANDO (*snatching the sword*): Chimène!
Have you gone mad?

CHIMÈNE: You call yourself a king?
Had you but done me justice, and exiled
The man I loved more than I love my life,
Roderic would now be living, and no man
Could say I let my love for him outweigh
My duty to my father.

SANCHO: You mistake,
Dear lady . . .

CHIMÈNE: No, I will not marry you,
Though the king order me.

FERNANDO: I order you,
Chimène, to wed the victor in the fight;
Since you confess you love him. Here he is.

[RODERIC *enters.*

SANCHO: Pardon me, O great Cid, but when I brought
My sword, to lay it at your lady's feet,
And tell her how you conquered me, and spared
My life, she would not listen, and she tried,
Thinking that you were dead, to kill herself.

RODERIC (*throwing himself at the feet of* CHIMÈNE): Once more, Chimène, I offer you my life.
No man shall come between us. If you need
A sword to slay your father's murderer,
My sword, as I have sworn, shall do the deed.
There is no arm now strong enough, save mine,
To kill the man. Speak, or he dies, Chimène!
But say sometimes, of him you would not wed,
"Had he not loved me, he would not be dead."

CHIMÈNE: Ah, Roderic, I have said too much, I fear,
Before these gentlemen, to gainsay it.
I love you more than honour, duty, life,
And yet how can I ever be your wife?
FERNANDO: Chimène, since you still hesitate between
Honour and love, the Cid shall honour you
Above all Spanish women; for your sake
War upon every Moor he now shall make,
And come back in a year, to claim your hand,
With trains of captive kings of Moorish land.

The Liar

Persons in the Drama

DORANTE, *a young law student*
GERONTE, *his father*
ALCIPPE *and* PHILISTE, *his friends*
CLITON, *his valet*
CLARICE, *Alcippe's sweetheart*
LUCRÈCE, *her friend*
ISABELLE, *her maid*

ACT I

DORANTE *has just come from Poitiers, and, dressed in the habits of a nobleman, he is sauntering in the Tuileries, attended by his valet,* CLITON.

DORANTE: Oh, how glad I am to get away from the dust and dullness of the law, and wear the sword! I'm delighted that my father at last allowed me to follow my own tastes. Now, Cliton, tell me fairly: do I look

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Corneille cannot, of course, compare as a comic dramatist with Molière. That is a comparison which no one in the world except the creator of Sir John Falstaff could stand. Nor, it must be confessed, are Corneille's comedies as interesting as his tragedies. Regarded, however, as a piece of light literature, his 'Liar,' or 'Le Menteur,' which appeared in 1642, is a lively and

like a young courtier, or is there still something of the law student about me?

CLITON: You are a marvel, sir. You only arrived in Paris yesterday evening, and even a Parisian would now take you for a gallant young man of the town. Of course, if there is anything that you still wish to know——

DORANTE: Who are these two charming ladies?

CLITON: I don't know.

DORANTE: Of what use are you to me, then?

CLITON: But I can soon find out from their coachman. There isn't a coachman in Paris that could help talking, though it cost him his life.

[CLITON *runs off, and* CLARICE *and* LUCRÈCE *enter, followed by* ISABELLE. *On approaching,* CLARICE *stumbles.*

CLARICE: Oh!

DORANTE (*giving her his hand*): What a lucky slip for me! I am vastly pleased, madam, to have an occasion to give you my hand!

CLARICE: The pleasure, sir, is so slight that it is scarcely worth your taking it.

DORANTE: It is true that neither my attentions nor your desires have led up to this. Still, I am very happy, for I am sure my small deserts would never have gained me this pleasure.

CLARICE: I think the greatest pleasure consists in

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amusing sketch. Like all Corneille's earliest and best work, it is clear in outline and simple in construction, and if we do not take it any more seriously than the author did, we shall find it very entertaining. Dorante, the young law student who invents and circulates the wildest of falsehoods, for the mere pleasure of exercising his imagination, is not a disagreeable change from Corneille's usual incarnations of chivalrous heroism. Indeed, one sometimes suspects that Corneille wrote 'The Liar' as a relief after 'The Cid.' The comedy is derived from the Spanish; but it is a far more polished production than its original. Corneille takes his plots wherever he finds them, but his characters are his own; they reflect the French society of his age. This epitome has been prepared from the French text.

gaining something without having merited it. Surely a mark of favour is worth more than a mark of gratitude?

DORANTE: It is the intention of the giver which makes a gift precious. Ah, if in giving me your hand you also gave me your heart, what a gift that would be!

CLARICE: My heart is not so quickly disposed of. This is the first time I have seen you.

DORANTE: Ever since I returned from the war in Germany—quite a year ago—I have been trying to obtain an introduction to you.

CLARICE: What! You have been fighting in Germany!

DORANTE: Yes; four years. Haven't you seen my name in the Gazette? I have taken part in a good many battles and sieges.

CLITON (*in a whisper, pulling his coat tail*): You are raving, sir. You only came from Poitiers yesterday.

DORANTE (*also in a whisper*): Keep quiet, you wretch. (*Aloud to* CLARICE) Yes, I distinguished myself in Germany; but last winter I was sent with some despatches to Paris, and, seeing you, I gave up my career, and stayed on in town in the hope of meeting you.

ISABELLE (*whispering to* CLARICE): Alcippe is coming, madam; he will be suspicious.

CLARICE: Good-bye, sir. We have to meet a friend. Some other day, perhaps, we shall be able to have a longer chat.

[*The ladies make their curtsey, and depart.*

DORANTE: Follow them, Cliton.

CLITON: I know all that there is to know. The coachman said to me that the lovelier of the two ladies was his mistress. She lives at the Place Royale, and her name is Lucrèce. The other lady resides close by; though I do not know what her name is, I shall soon find out.

DORANTE: You need not trouble, Cliton. I am certain it was Lucrèce who spoke to me. She was much the lovelier.

CLITON: Pardon me, sir; but I think that the silent lady was the more beautiful. Besides, silence in a woman is a marvellous quality. Yes, if she isn't Lucrèce, I'm a fool!

DORANTE: I know you are. But here comes two of my friends. They seem uncommonly excited.

[ALCIPPE *and* PHILISTE *enter.*

PHILISTE: What! A magnificent feast on the river with music?

ALCIPPE: Yes; yesterday evening, but I don't know who gave it to her.

DORANTE: I did.

ALCIPPE: You, Dorante? You? I did not know you were in Paris.

DORANTE: I have now been here a month; but, having fallen head over heels in love, I have not had time to call on either of you.

CLITON (*whispering*): Are you mad? You only came yesterday.

PHILISTE (*whispering to* ALCIPPE): It is clear that Dorante is the man who is trying to win Clarice from you. Will you challenge him at once?

ALCIPPE: No, I'll see Clarice first. I'm dying of jealousy. Come.

[*With a cold bow to* DORANTE *they depart.* DORANTE *is taken aback, but quickly recovers.*

CLITON: I can't stand it any longer. What! you've been four years fighting in Germany, and one year in Paris courting a lady you just met for the first time, and following another about for a month, and entertaining her on the river with feasts and concerts. What good does this wild talk do you?

DORANTE: Do you think Lucrèce would have listened to me if I had told her that I was a raw lad just come up from the university? "If you need any Roman or canonical law, dear lady, I am well up in Justinian and Baldus." Is that the way you would have me make love,

Cliton? No! One must discourse of movements and counter movements, heroic sorties and skilful ambuscades. No matter what mistakes you make, so long as you astonish the lady; do that, and she will at last admire you for the tricks you have played on her. A man with a good imagination——

CLITON: A liar——

DORANTE: If you like; but you must dazzle a woman if you want to win her. When you have gained her love, she will forgive the means by which you gained it. Heavens! Here comes my father.

[GERONTE *enters.*

GERONTE: I have been seeking all day for you, my son. Where have you been? It is time I told you why I brought you to Paris. One of my oldest friends has a charming daughter. Clarice is her name, and I have arranged for you to marry her.

DORANTE (*under his breath*): Oh, Lucrèce, Lucrèce!

GERONTE: You are the only child I have, my boy, and I want to see my grandchildren before I die. I am getting old, so your marriage had better take place at once.

DORANTE: It is impossible, my father, for me to marry Clarice. I am already married.

GERONTE: Married? Without my consent and knowlledge? To whom, sir?

DORANTE: To Orphise, the heiress of Seigneur Armédon.

GERONTE: I have never heard of either of them.

DORANTE: That's strange. They live in Poitiers, and Armédon, my dear father, is as noble as you are. I was flirting one evening with Orphise, and Armédon found me in her room. Already half in love with the beautiful girl, I agreed to a secret marriage in order to prevent any scandal. Surely you will not blame me for acting like a man of honour?

GERONTE: I don't blame you for that, but for keeping

the affair hidden from me. Good-bye. I must see Clarice's father at once, and break off our arrangement.

[*He departs.*

DORANTE: Well, Cliton, didn't I get out of that easily? A fool would have protested that he would not marry this Clarice, and yet would have let himself be married to her at last, in spite of his love for Lucrèce. What a convenient thing a good imagination is.

CLITON: So there's no truth in this tale of a secret marriage?

DORANTE: None whatever.

CLITON: You would much oblige your valet, sir, by giving me some means of knowing when you are about to deal one of these master strokes of yours. In this case, though well warned, I was as much deceived as your father was.

DORANTE: You must study my ways, and you'll soon fall into them.

CLITON: You dig so many pits for others, that I'm afraid you will at last fall into one of them yourself.

DORANTE: Have no fear. Come to my lodgings; I must follow up the good impression I made on Lucrèce, by sending her a love-letter. You shall take it at once.

[*They depart.*

ACT II

CLARICE *and her maid,* ISABELLE, *are standing in the doorway of* LUCRÈCE'S *house in the Place Royale.*

CLARICE: I confess I would rather have Alcippe; but he has been courting me now for two years, and promising that as soon as his father comes to Paris we shall be married. But his father never comes. What is the other one like?

ISABELLE: Geronte's son, whom your father has chosen for your husband? Ha, ha, ha! You remember the gallant young soldier you met this morning, who had

been fighting four years in Germany, and followed you about for a twelvemonth? That was Dorante.

CLARICE: And he came up from Poitiers yesterday! Oh, the lying knave!

ISABELLE: They all do it. Every raw university student tries to pass himself off as a cavalier. They have all fought in Germany, most of them have taken part in every campaign.

CLARICE: But that isn't all. He has got me into trouble with Alcippe by saying he gave me a feast on the river yesterday evening. Oh, the dances I am supposed to have danced! Oh, the fine wines and the fine dishes I am supposed to have had!

ISABELLE: Dorante must certainly be madly in love with you. And how clever he is! Having found out that Alcippe was courting you, he has, by making him jealous, rendered him intolerable. At the same time, he has sent his father to yours to arrange a marriage, and the matter is now agreed on.

CLARICE: No, it isn't; for it turns out that Dorante is already married. In spite of this, he has written a love-letter to Lucrèce. Just out of mischief, she has given him an appointment beneath her window; and she wants me to do the talking. Look, here he comes! I must run up to the window.

[*They disappear, and* DORANTE *and* CLITON *stroll to the house.*

DORANTE: Oh, what a day I've had! Only yesterday evening I came from Poitiers, and I have already refused a marriage, got into a love-affair, and killed my man.

CLITON: Killed your man? Was the challenge Alcippe sent you this afternoon a serious matter, then? He believed your tale about the feast you gave to Clarice?

DORANTE: Yes, that was the trouble. He believed it, so there was nothing to do but to kill him.

CLITON: You will never have to kill me, for I shall never believe a word of anything you say.

DORANTE: Hush, the window is opening!

[CLARICE *opens the window and leans out;* LUCRÈCE *stands in the shadow behind her.*

CLARICE: Is that you, Dorante?

DORANTE: Yes, madam. Here is Dorante ready to live or die for you. Oh, that I could efface from my life the days I lived without knowing and loving you!

LUCRÈCE (*in a whisper to* CLARICE): He said the very same thing in his letter to me.

CLARICE: Are you really in love with me?

DORANTE: Night and day I dream only of Lucrèce.

CLARICE (*whispering to her friend*): It is now your turn to receive his attentions. (*Aloud to* DORANTE) Will you tell me, sir, what is the right name to give to the man who only came up from Poitiers yesterday, and now says that he has been fighting in Germany for four years, and following me for twelve months; who is sometimes married, sometimes a bachelor; and who gives magnificent feasts on the river at night while he is sleeping in his bed? What is the right name to give such a man?

CLITON: Now, if you can get out of this, I will admit you are clever.

DORANTE (*in a whisper to* CLITON): It is as easy as possible. (*Aloud to* CLARICE) I will explain everything to you one day; at present I will deal with the matter of most importance. You were the cause of my pretended marriage.

CLARICE: I?

DORANTE: You! Listen to me. Not being able to consent——

CLITON: For pity sake, tell me if you are going to use your imagination!

DORANTE (*in a savage whisper*): Can't you be quiet? (*Aloud to* CLARICE) Being unable to consent to marry

anyone but you, I pretended to be married already, in order to prevent my father from arranging marriage between me and Clarice.

CLARICE: But I was told that you took Clarice's hand this morning in the Tuileries, and made love to her.

DORANTE: It is false! I have never made love to anyone but you.

CLARICE: This impudence is more than I can endure. I saw you make love to Clarice with my own eyes. It is impossible to believe a single word you say. Never let me see you again.

[*With an angry movement she closes the window, and* GERONTE, *who has overheard the conversation, comes out of the house.*

GERONTE: Do you call yourself a gentleman? Did I hold a dagger to your throat when I asked you if you would marry Clarice? Why, then, did you put me off with a foul lie? Have I ever forced you to do anything that you disliked? Did I not allow you to leave the law and come to Paris and prepare for the army as soon as ever you said you wanted to? And all this kindness, you ungrateful wretch, you have repaid with lies!

DORANTE: Father, father, listen to me! I will tell you the truth. I have fallen madly in love with a beautiful young lady, Lucrèce. You know her?

GERONTE: The cousin of Clarice? Yes; her father is also one of my old friends.

DORANTE: I was afraid you would marry me to Clarice; but I could not tell you I adored Lucrèce, as I did not know if she returned my love. That was why I pretended I was married. If you can only get the consent of Lucrèce's father, I'll give you my word of honour that I will marry her at once. Cliton will bear me out that I am in earnest this time, won't you, Cliton?

GERONTE: Aren't you ready to die of shame to find that your own father must needs place more faith in the word of your valet than in your own statement? Now

listen. I will give you one more chance. I will ask on your behalf for the hand of Lucrèce, but if you put any obstacle in the way of this marriage I swear I will kill you with my own hands.

[*He re-enters the house.*

DORANTE: I do not fear. If only he can obtain Lucrèce for me I shall be entirely happy.

[CLARICE *and* LUCRÈCE *come out of the house.*

CLARICE (*to* LUCRÈCE): Well, we must find out at once which of us he is really in love with. You see, in spite of all he has written to you, he has only eyes for me.

DORANTE (*to* CLARICE): Believe me that everything I have done has been done with the sole object of winning you.

CLARICE: There you are, Lucrèce, he has veered round to me again. How can we place any faith in him?

DORANTE (*whispering to* CLITON): Lucrèce! Heavens, I have mistaken their names!

CLITON (*whispering to* DORANTE): I told you Lucrèce was the lovelier. It was Clarice who spoke to you at the window. I have just found that out.

DORANTE (*still in a whisper*): You are right. Lucrèce is by far the more beautiful. Now watch my new game, Cliton, and see how easily I'll bring it off.

CLARICE: Now, Dorante, speak frankly for once. Are you in love with Lucrèce? Surely you spoke to her this evening in very loving terms?

DORANTE: I have never spoken a word to Lucrèce, though I loved her all along. It was you, Clarice, that appeared at the window, and I paid you back in your own coin. I pretended to make love to you.

CLARICE: But in the Tuileries? Were you pretending then?

DORANTE: Not exactly pretending. I talked to you, but I fell in love with Lucrèce. (*To* LUCRÈCE) Ah, madam, why were you then so reserved and silent? I simply talked to your cousin with the object of making

your acquaintance. You are the only woman I have ever loved, believe me.

LUCRÈCE: You set me a difficult task.

DORANTE: My father is asking yours, this very minute, to agree to our marriage. Can you want any further proof? My dear Lucrèce, you must see that I am really in earnest.

[ALCIPPE *and* GERONTE *enter.*

ALCIPPE: My father has come up to Paris at last, and arranged our marriage, Clarice. You are mine at last.

GERONTE: Lucrèce, your father has engaged you to my Dorante. I know he is madly in love with you, and he is not a bad boy at heart, so I am sure you will be happy.

DORANTE: And I'm sure we will, Lucrèce. Won't you accept me?

LUCRÈCE (*smiling*): I am an obedient daughter, Dorante; since my father has arranged for me to marry you, I must do so.

ALCIPPE: Come, Clarice; let us go in and sign the marriage contract.

DORANTE: Yes, Lucrèce, let us go in.

[*The two couples disappear.*

CLITON: Ah, Dorante has been taken in his own trap; but he has got out of it with his usual cleverness. Any fool can be untruthful, but it takes a clever man to brave out a lie, and even then he is only wasting his talents.

WILLIAM COWPER

The Task

I.—The Sofa

I SING the sofa. I, who lately sang
Truth, Hope, and Charity, and touched with awe
The solemn chords, and, with a trembling hand,
Escaped with pain from that adventurous flight,
Now seek repose upon an humbler theme;
The theme, though humble, yet august and proud
The occasion—for the fair commands the song.

After giving an account of how necessity invented stools, convenience the elbow-chair, and luxury the sofa, the poet rejoices that he is not confined to indolent pleasures. He describes the charms of a rural walk, amid rural sights and sounds. He watches the labourer at work, and dwells upon nature's demand for activity.

By ceaseless action all that is subsists.
Constant rotation of the unwearied wheel
That Nature rides upon maintains her health,
Her beauty, her fertility. She dreads

With the publication of "The Task" in 1785, Cowper (see Vol. IX, p. 177) at once obtained a place in the front rank of contemporary poets. Begun in the winter of 1783, it was written at the suggestion of a friend, and its success was complete, for here Cowper showed himself in his natural spirit. "The Task" has been said to be a poem about Cowper himself, and although it contains hardly a token of the tragedy of his life, yet his ailings, his walks, his friends, his abhorrence of slavery, and his unique religious views are delightfully portrayed. It is also distinguished not only for its grace of diction, eloquent sincerity, and humane tenderness, but by its departure from the stilted conventions of the eighteenth century. The testimony to the divine in nature that abounded in Wordsworthian poetry had its first and loftiest expression in the lines of "The Task."

An instant's pause, and lives but while she moves;
Its own revolvency upholds the world.
Winds from all quarters agitate the air,
And fit the limpid element for use,
Else noxious; oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams,
All feel the freshening impulse, and are cleansed
By restless undulation; even the oak
Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm;
He seems indeed indignant, and to feel
The impression of the blast with proud disdain,
Frowning as if in his unconscious arm
He held the thunder. But the monarch owes
His firm stability to what he scorns;
More fixt below, the more disturbed above.
The law by which all creatures else are bound
Binds man, the lord of all. Himself derives
No mean advantage from a kindred cause:
From strenuous toil his hours of sweetest ease.

Lovely is art, continues the poet; but is not nature far lovelier? He contrasts the unnatural gaiety of dissipation with the natural gaiety of innocence. Civilisation, with its freedom and culture, should be the nurse of virtue; yet too often is it otherwise in cities. In cities virtue cannot triumph; it can only flee.

God made the country, and man made the town.
What wonder, then, that health and virtue, gifts
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
That life holds out to all, should most abound
And least be threatened in the fields and groves?
Possess ye, therefore, ye who, borne about
In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
But such as art contrives, possess ye still
Your element; there only ye can shine,
There only minds like yours can do no harm.
Our groves were planted to console at noon
The pensive wanderer in their shades. At eve

The moonbeam, sliding softly in between
The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,
Birds warbling all the music. We can spare
The splendour of your lamps; they but eclipse
Our softer satellite. Your songs confound
Our more harmonious notes: the thrush departs
Scared, and the offended nightingale is mute.
There is a public mischief in your mirth;
It plagues your country. Folly such as yours,
Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
Has made, what enemies would ne'er have done,
Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,
A mutilated structure soon to fall.

II.—The Timepiece

The poet's heart is wrung by the tales of outrage inflicted by man upon man that daily reach his ears.

He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
Not coloured like his own, and having power
To enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause,
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations who had else,
Like kindred drops, been mingled into one.
Thus man devours his brother, and destroys;
And, worse than all, and most to be deplored,
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes, that Mercy, with a bleeding heart,
Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.
Then what is man? And what man, seeing this
And having human feelings, does not blush
And hang his head, to think himself a man?

Yet these sins are committed at a time when God reveals His wrath against mankind by awful signs and portents. "England,

with all thy faults, I love thee still," but England's faults are deep and deadly. The poet bitterly satirises the luxury that emasculates the navy and destroys national honour. But what vice, asks the poet, has ever been subdued by satire? It is the pulpit that should be the most effective guard of virtue's cause; but the pulpit, alas! is perverted by affectation and love of applause. The preacher, stuffed with vanity, and putting forth the love of philosophy in preference to the word of Christ, fails utterly to censure the extravagances and follies that prey upon society.

> Now basket up the family of plagues
> That waste our vitals; peculation, sale
> Of honour, perjury, corruption, frauds
> By forgery, by subterfuge of law,
> By tricks and lies as numerous and as keen
> As the necessities their authors feel;
> Then cast them, closely bundled, every brat
> At the right door. Profusion is its sire . . .
> Profusion, deluging a state with lusts
> Of grossest nature and of worse effects,
> Prepares it for its ruin; hardens, blinds,
> And warps the consciences of public men,
> Till they can laugh at virtue, mock the fools
> That trust them, and in the end disclose a face
> That would have shocked credulity herself,
> Unmasked, vouchsafing this their sole excuse—
> Since all alike are selfish, why not they?

This accursed cause of mischief has itself a cause. It is the lack of discipline at the universities—the poet maintains—and consequent idleness and degradation, that ruin the pastors, and through the pastors their flocks.

III.—The Garden

Now the poet changes his theme, and treads "a cleanlier road." Since pulpits fail, to what purpose cracks he his satiric whip? Let him sing the pleasures of the country and of home.

> Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
> Of paradise that has survived the fall!
> Though few now taste thee unimpaired and pure,

Or, tasting, long enjoy thee; too infirm,
Or too incautious, to preserve thy sweets
Unmixed with drops of bitter, which neglect,
Or temper sheds, into thy crystal cup.
Thou art the nurse of virtue. In thine arms
She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,
Heaven-born, and destined to the skies again.
Thou art not known where pleasure is adored—
That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist
And wandering eyes, still leaning on the arm
Of novelty, her fickle, frail support;
For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
And finding in the calm of truth-tied love
Joys that her stormy raptures never yield.

In former days men shunned offenders against purity and honour. Now, so candid and so fair have men become, forsooth, that evil-doers are safe from censure. The poet, a "stricken deer that left the herd long since," surveys, in his retirement, the delusive dreams of men; how, for instance, they labour to build up systems of history and philosophy that pass away into nothingness because they ignore the eternal truths of God.

God never meant that man should scale the heavens
By strides of human wisdom. In His works,
Though wondrous, He commands us, in His word,
To seek Him rather where His mercy shines.
The mind, indeed, enlightened from above,
Views Him in all; ascribes to the grand cause
The grand effect; acknowledges with joy
His manner, and with rapture tastes His style.
But never yet did philosophic tube,
That brings the planets home into the eye
Of observation, and discovers, else
Not visible, His family of worlds,
Discover Him that rules them; such a veil
Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,
And dark in things divine.

The poet discourses at length on the innocent pleasures of the garden and the greenhouse. Why, he asks, does nature

lack admirers? Why are the country mansions deserted by their owners, drawn by ambition, avarice, and lust of pleasure to London, the abode of public corruption and private vice? London has many righteous men. Well for her that she has, else Sodom's fate would surely fall upon her.

IV.—The Winter Evening

Hark! the horn of the postman, light-hearted messenger of grief to some, of joy to others. The newspaper has come.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.

The poet now peeps through the loopholes of retreat, by means of the newspaper, into the busy world beyond. He then addresses winter.

O winter, ruler of the inverted year,
Thy scattered hair with sleet-like ashes filled,
Thy breath congealed upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapped in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urged by storms along its slippery way,
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st! . . .
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturbed retirement and the hours
Of long, uninterrupted evening know.

The simple pleasures of a rural winter evening are contrasted by the poet with the glare and luxury of the town. He reflects on the winter hardships of the honest poor; mourns the degeneracy of the country folk—and ends by expressing the belief that, despite all corruption, the love of nature is in every man's heart. Do we not see it revealed in the gardens and window-boxes of the towns?

V.—The Winter Morning's Walk

'Tis morning; and the sun, with ruddy orb
Ascending, fires the horizon; while the clouds
That crowd away before the driving wind,
More ardent as the disc emerges more,
Resemble most some city in a blaze
Seen through the leafless wood. His slanting ray
Slides ineffectual down the snowy vale,
And, tinging all with his own rosy hue,
From every herb and every spiry blade
Stretches a length of shadow o'er the field. . . .
The verdure of the plain lies buried deep
Beneath the dazzling deluge; and the bents
And coarser grass, up-spearing o'er the rest,
Of late unsightly and unseen, now shine
Conspicuous, and in bright apparel clad,
And fledged with icy feathers, nod superb.
The cattle mourn in corners where the fence
Screens them, and seem, half-petrified, to sleep
In unrecumbent sadness. There they wait
Their wonted fodder, not like hungering man,
Fretful if unsupplied, but silent, meek,
And patient of the slow-paced swain's delay.

The poet marvels at the beauty of a frost-bound waterfall, and contrasts it with the artificial splendours of the imperial ice palace on the Neva. "Great princes have great playthings," and the greatest of their playthings is war. He traces war back to Cain's murder of his brother, and shows how war gave birth to the king. He condemns despotism, and compares it with honourable rule over a free people.

Whose freedom is by suff'rance, and at will
Of a superior, he is never free.
Who lives, and is not weary of, a life
Exposed to manacles, deserves them well.
The state that strives for liberty, though foiled,
And forced t' abandon what she bravely sought

Deserves at least applause for her attempt,
And pity for her loss. But that's a cause
Not often unsuccessful; power usurped
Is weakness when opposed; conscious of wrong,
'Tis pusillanimous and prone to flight.
But slaves that once conceive the glowing thought
Of freedom, in that hope itself possess
All that the contest calls for: spirit, strength,
The scorn of danger, and united hearts—
The surest presage of the good they seek.

Shameful to manhood, then, is the "abode of broken hearts," the Bastille.

There dwell the most forlorn of human kind,
Immured though unaccused, condemned, untried,
Cruelly spared, and hopeless of escape! . .
Oh, comfortless existence, hemmed around
With woes, which who that suffers would not kneel
And beg for exile or the pangs of death?
That man should thus encroach on fellow-man,
Abridge him of his just and native rights,
Eradicate him, tear him from his hold
Upon the endearments of domestic life
And social, nip his fruitfulness and use,
And doom him for, perhaps, a heedless word
To barrenness, and solitude, and tears,
Moves indignation, makes the name of king
(Of king when such prerogative can please),
As dreadful as the Manichean god,
Adored through fear, strong only to destroy.

Liberty alone gives lustre and perfume to the flower of life. But the best liberty is one that no oppression can take away—liberty of heart, bought with the blood of Christ, the deliverer of mankind from the slavery of sin. The soul who sees God can learn from nature. From Him come all gifts that soothe the life of man.

But, O Thou bounteous giver of all good!
Thou art of all Thy gifts Thyself the crown;

Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor,
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away!

VI.—The Winter Walk at Noon

"There is in souls a sympathy with sounds," and the ringing of the village bells brings clear memories to the poet's mind—memories, especially, of his father, whose kind sternness he had misunderstood.

But not to understand a treasure's worth
Till time has stolen away the slighted good
Is cause of half the poverty we feel,
And makes the world the wilderness it is.
The few that pray at all pray oft amiss,
And seeking grace to improve the prize they hold,
Would urge a wiser suit than asking more.

The winter noon has the warmth of May; the sky is cloudlessly blue, the scene below white, without a speck.

No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.
The redbreast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes, and more than half suppressed;
Pleased with his solitude, and flitting light
From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
From many a twig the pendant drops of ice,
That tinkle in the withered leaves below.
Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
Charms more than silence. Meditation here
May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
May give a useful lesson to the head,
And learning, wiser grow without his books . . .
What prodigies can power divine perform
More grand than it produces year by year,
And all in sight of inattentive man?
Familiar with the effect, we slight the cause,
And in the constancy of nature's course,
The regular return of genial months,
And renovation of a faded world,
See naught to wonder at.

Reflection on the yearly re-awakening of trees and flowers leads the poet to a concise and culminating statement of his belief as to the relation of God to nature.

From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,
Is Nature's progress when she lectures man
In heavenly truth, evincing as she makes
The grand transition that there lives and works
A soul in all things, and that soul is God.

Man praises man, but let it be the poet's part to praise nature, and to prophesy the coming of the age of universal harmony and love among created things. Happiest now is he who, in his life of retired and tranquil contemplation, "shows somewhat of that happier life to come."

So glide my life away! and so at last,
My share of duties decently fulfilled,
May some disease, not tardy to perform
Its destined office, yet with gentle stroke,
Dismiss me weary to a safe retreat,
Beneath the turf that I have often trod. . . .
But all is in His hand whose praise I seek.
In vain the poet sings, and the world hears,
If He regard not, though divine the theme.
'Tis not in artful measures, in the chime
And idle tinkling of the minstrel's lyre,
To charm His ear whose eye is on the heart,
Whose frown can disappoint the proudest strain,
Whose approbation—prosper even mine.

DANTE ALIGHIERI

The Divine Comedy, or Vision of Dante

I.—Inferno

DANTE loses his way in a gloomy forest, and is hindered by wild beasts from ascending a mountain. He is met by Virgil, who promises to show him the punishments of hell, and afterwards of purgatory; and that he shall then be conducted by Beatrice into paradise. He follows the Roman poet, and the two come to the gate of hell, where they read the dread words.

"THROUGH me you pass into the city of woe:
Through me you pass into eternal pain:
Through me among the people lost for aye.
Justice the founder of my fabric moved:
To rear me was the task of power divine,
Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.

Dante, whose name is contracted (according to the fashion of his time) from Durante, is immortalised as incomparably the greatest poet of Italy. He belonged to the illustrious Florentine family of Alighieri, and was born at Florence in May, 1265. He studied at his native city, then at Bologna and Padua, afterwards proceeding to the university of Paris; and, if Boccaccio is correct, he even visited England. Soldier, statesman, philosopher, and poet, Dante rose to the highest civic eminence, being elected in 1300 one of the *priori* of Florence. He died at Ravenna on September 14, 1321. The keynote of his poetic inspiration was his pure and tender love for Beatrice Portinari, whom he saw at a family festival when he was only nine years old. Dante's perennial fame rests on his trilogy the "Divine Comedy" ("Divina Commedia"), in which he purposed "to say of Beatrice that which never yet was said of any woman." In these wonderful visions of hell, purgatory, and heaven, Dante, with all the cleverness of philosophical argument and all the power and purity of language, gives an encyclopædic view of the highest culture and knowledge of his age. Historically he may be said to signalise one of the three great epochs of the past—namely, the Gothic period. The age of Pericles and the age of the Renaissance were certainly not more notable or in-

Before me things create were none, save things
Eternal, and eternal I endure.
All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

They enter. Here, as Dante understands from Virgil, those were punished who had spent their time (for it could not be called living) in apathetic indifference to good and evil. Arriving at the river Acheron, they there find the old ferryman Charon, who takes the spirits to the opposite shore. As they reach it Dante, seized with terror, falls into a trance. Roused by thunder, and following his guide, he descends into Limbo, the first circle of the Inferno. Here are the souls of those who, though they have lived virtuously and suffer not for great sins, nevertheless, through lack of baptism, merit not the bliss of paradise. They pass on to the second circle. Here at the entrance is Minos, the infernal judge, by whom Dante is admonished to beware how he enters these regions. He witnesses the punishment of carnal sinners; among these is Francesca da Rimini, to whom Dante speaks compassionately. She replies.

"No greater grief than to remember days
Of joy, when mis'ry is at hand! That kens
Thy learn'd instructor. Yet so eagerly
If thou art bent to know the primal root
From whence our love gat being, I will do
As one who weeps and tells his tale. One day,
For our delight, we read of Lancelot
How him love thrall'd. Alone we were, and no
Suspicion near us. Oft times by that reading
Our eyes were drawn together and the hue
Fled from our alter'd cheek. But at one point
Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,
The wished smile so rapturously kissed.
By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er

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fluential than the Gothic age of thought and action. It was a time when Cimabue and Giotto were emancipating the art of painting from Byzantine bonds and the Pisani were re-discovering the art of sculpture. It was a time of the papacy's zenith of temporal power, and also a time when St. Francis of Assisi challenged men to new spiritual life; when Bernard was writing immortal hymns, and St. Thomas of Aquinas was formulating his theology. One of the standard English translations is that by the Rev. H. F. Cary, first published in 1805, from which the following epitome has been prepared.

From me shall separate, at once my lips
All trembling kiss'd. Then in its leaves that day
We read no more."

Through pity at her tale Dante falls fainting, and on his recovery finds himself in the third circle, where the gluttonous are punished.

Cerberus, cruel monster, fierce and strange,
Through his wide three-fold throat barks as a dog
Over a multitude immersed beneath.
His eyes glare crimson, black his unctuous beard,
His belly large, and claw'd the hands with which
He tears the spirits, flays them, and their limbs
Piecemeal disparts.

They descend into the fourth circle, at the beginning of which Plutus is stationed. Here the same doom awaits the prodigal and the avaricious—everlastingly to meet in direful conflict, rolling great weights against each other with mutual curses. In the fifth circle they find the wrathful and gloomy, tormented in the Stygian lake.

We the circle cross'd
To the next steep, arriving at a well,
That boiling pours itself down to a foss
Sluiced from its source. Far murkier was the wave
Than sablest grain; and we in company
Of the inky waters, journeying by their side,
Enter'd, though by a different track, beneath.
Into a lake, the Stygian named, expands
The dismal stream, when it hath reach'd the foot
Of the grey wither'd cliffs. Intent I stood
To gaze, and in the marish sunk descried
A miry tribe, all naked, and with looks
Betokening rage. They with their hands alone
Struck not, but with the head, the breast, the feet,
Cutting each other piecemeal with their fangs.

Phlegyas, ferryman of the lake, conveys Virgil and Dante across, and they arrive at the city of Dis, where demons close the portals against them. They enter by the help of an angel and discover that heretics are punished in tombs burning with

fierce fire. Going forward between the sepulchres, the pilgrims arrive at the verge of a rocky precipice, which encloses the seventh circle, where the violent who have committed crimes against their neighbours are punished by being tormented in a river of blood. When the tormented souls try to emerge, a troop of centaurs aim arrows at them. One of these instructs the two pilgrims.

"These are the souls of tyrants, who were given
To blood and rapine. Here they wail aloud
Their merciless wrongs. Here Alexander dwells,
And Dionysius fell, who many a year
Of woe wrought for fair Sicily. That brow,
Whereon the hair so jetty clustering hangs,
Is Azzolino; that with flaxen locks
Obizzo of Este, in the world destroyed
By his foul stepson. . . .
There Heav'n's stern justice lays chastising hand
On Attila, who was the scourge of earth,
On Sextus and on Pyrrhus, and extracts
Tears ever by the seething flood unlock'd
From the Rinieri; of Corneto this,
Pazzo the other named, who filled the ways
With violence and war."

Still in the seventh circle, Dante enters the second compartment, which contains those who have done violence on their own persons and on those who have violently consumed their goods. The first become trees, which bleed when a twig is broken, whereon the harpies build their nests; the latter are chased and torn by black mastiffs. The third compartment of this seventh circle is a plain of hot, dry sand, over which fall flakes of fire, slowly wafting down as flakes of snow; here are punished those who have committed sins of violence against God, against nature, and against art. And in the eighth circle, among other lost ones are punished those who are guilty of simony. They are fixed with the head downwards in certain apertures, so that no more than the legs can be seen from without, and on the soles of the feet are seen burning flames. Dante is taken down by his guide to the bottom of the gulf, and there finds Pope Nicholas the Fifth, whose evil deeds, together with those of other pontiffs, are bitterly reprehended. The punishment of hypocrites is witnessed. Caiaphas is seen fixed to cross on the ground so that all tread on him in passing. In the seventh gulf are seen robbers tormented by venomous serpents.

We from the bridge's head descended, where
To the eighth mound it joins; and then, the chasm
Opening to view, I saw a crowd within
Of serpents terrible, so strange of shape
And hideous, that remembrance in my veins
Yet shrinks the vital current.
Amid the dread exuberance of woe
Ran naked spirits wing'd with horrid fear,
Nor hope had they of crevice where to hide,
Or heliotrope to charm them out of view.
With serpents were their hands behind them bound,
Which through their reins enfixed the tail and head
Twisted in folds before. And lo! on one
Near to our side, darted an adder up,
And, where the neck is on the shoulders tied,
Transpierced him.

The two go forward to the arch that stretches over the eighth gulf, and behold numberless flames wherein are punished the evil counsellors, each flame containing a sinner, save one, in which were Diomede and Ulysses. Ulysses relates the manner of his death.

"When I escap'd
From Circe, who beyond a circling year
Had held me near Caieta by her charms,
Ere thus Æneas had named the shore;
Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence
Of my old father, nor return of love,
That should have crowned Penelope with joy,
Could overcome in me the zeal I had
To explore the world, and search the ways of life,
Man's evil and his virtue. Forth I sailed
Into the deep illimitable main,
With but one bark, and the small faithful band
That yet cleav'd to me. As Iberia far,
Far as Morocco, either shore I saw,
And the Sardinian and each isle beside
Which round that ocean bathes.

Tardy with age were I and my companions when we
came
To the straight pass, where Hercules ordain'd
The boundaries not to be o'erstepped by man.
'O brothers!' I began, 'who to the west
Through perils without number now have reach'd
To this the short remaining watch, that yet
Our senses have to wake, refuse not proof
Of the unpeopled world, following the track
Of Phœbus. Call to mind from whence we sprang;
Ye were not formed to live the life of brutes,
But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.'
With these few words I sharpen'd for the voyage
The mind of my associates, that I then
Could scarcely have withheld them. To the dawn
Our poop we turn'd, and for the witless flight
Made our oars wings, still gaining on the left.
Each star of th' other pole night now beheld;
And ours so low that from the ocean floor
It rose not. Five times re-illum'd, as oft
Vanish'd the light from underneath the moon,
Since the deep way we enter'd, when from far
Appear'd a mountain dim, loftiest methought
Of all I e'er beheld. Joy seiz'd us straight,
But soon to mourning changed. From the new land
A whirlwind sprung and at her foremost side
Did strike the vessel. Thrice it whirl'd her round
With all the waves; the fourth time lifted up
The poop, and sank the prow; so fate decreed,
And over us the booming billow clos'd."

In the ninth gulf are seen sowers of scandal, schismatics, and heretics, with their limbs miserably maimed or divided in different ways. Amongst these the poet finds Mohammed. After witnessing the tortures of forgers in the tenth gulf, the poets see the agonies of traitors in the ninth circle, which is a frozen realm. In the midst of this is Lucifer. Dante and Virgil now ascend, till by a secret path they reach the surface of the other hemisphere of the earth, and once more obtain sight of the stars.

"The banners of Hell's Monarch do come forth
Toward us; therefore look," so spake my guide,
"If thou discern him." As, when breathes a cloud
Heavy and dense, or when the shades of night
Fall on our hemisphere, seems viewed from afar
A windmill, which the blast stirs briskly round,—
Such was the fabric then methought I saw.
To shield me from the wind, forthwith I drew
Behind my guide; no covert else was there.
Now came I (and with fear I bid my strain
Record the marvel) where the souls were all
Whelm'd underneath, transparent, as through glass
Pellucid the frail stem. Some prone were laid,
Others stood upright, this upon the soles,
That on his head, a third with face to feet
Arch'd like a bow. When to the point we came,
Whereat my guide was pleased that I should see
The creature eminent in beauty once,
He from before me stepped and made me pause.
"Lo!" he exclaim'd, "lo, Dis! and lo, the place,
Where thou hast need to arm thy heart with strength."
Then stood forth that emperor, who sways
The realm of sorrow, at mid-breast from the ice.
How passing strange it seemed, when I did spy
Upon his head three faces: one in front
Of hue vermillion, th' other two with this
Midway each shoulder join'd and at the crest;
The right 'twixt wan and yellow seem'd; the left
To look on, such as come from whence old Nile
Stoops to the lowlands. Under each shot forth
Two mighty wings, enormous as became
A bird so vast. Sails never such I saw
Outstretch'd on the wide sea. No plumes had they,
But were in texture like a bat; and these
He flapp'd i' th' air, that from him issued still
Three winds, wherewith Cocytus to its depth
Was frozen. At six eyes he wept; the tears

Adown three chins distill'd with bloody foam.
At every mouth his teeth a sinner champ'd,
Bruis'd as with pond'rous engine; so that three
Were in this guise tormented. But far more
Than from that gnawing was the foremost pang'd
By the fierce rending, whence oft-times the back
Was stript of all its skin. "That upper spirit,
Who hath worst punishment," so spake my guide,
"Is Judas, he hath his head within
And plies the feet without. Of th' other two,
Whose heads are under, from the murky jaw
Who hangs, is Brutus; lo! how he doth writhe
And speaks not. The other, Cassius, that appears
So large of limb. But night now re-ascends,
And it is time for parting. All is seen."

II.—Purgatorio

O'er better waves to speed her rapid course
The light barque of my genius lifts the sail,
Well pleased to leave so cruel sea behind;
And of that second region I will sing.
In which the human spirit from sinful blot
Is purged, and for ascent to Heaven prepares.

The shade of Cato of Utica appears and admonishes the two pilgrims what is needful to be done before they proceed on the way to Purgatory. He then disappears. They go towards the shore, where, in accordance with the instructions of Cato, Virgil washes Dante's face with the dew and girds him with a

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In all three of the poems of his trilogy, Dante intersperses allusions to events and personalities of his own age. The "Purgatorio" is largely coloured by this mode of illustrating the main topic—the purgation of the souls of the righteous and preparation for Paradise. The poet describes his rapturous delight at escaping a little before daybreak from the infernal regions. He finds himself breathing the pure air of the region round the Isle of Purgatory.

reed. They ascend the mountain of Purgatory, encountering many hovering spirits. Reaching the entrance, they are admitted by the angel deputed by St. Peter to keep it.

Passing along a pathway, they reach an open and level space that extends each way round the mountain. A wide marble cornice, on the side that rises, is covered with engravings of many stories of humility. To this approach the souls of those who expiate the sin of pride, bent down beneath the weight of many stones. Dante tells how sin is cancelled by suffering in Purgatory.

"Instructor!" I began,
"What I see hither tending bears no trace
Of human semblance, nor of aught beside
That my foil'd sight can guess!" He answering thus:
"So bent to earth, beneath their heavy terms
Of torment stoop they, that mine eye at first
Struggled as thine. But look intently thither;
And disentangle with thy lab'ring view
What, underneath those stones, approacheth; now,
E'en now, may'st thou discern the pangs of each."
Christians and proud! O poor and wretched ones!
That, feeble in the mind's eye, lean your trust
Upon unstaid perverseness! Know ye not
That we are worms, yet made at last to form
The wing'd insect, imp'd with angel plumes,
That to Heaven's justice unobstructed soars?
Why buoy ye up aloft your unfledg'd souls?
Abortive then and shapeless ye remain,
Like the untimely embryon of a worm.
As, to support incumbent floor or roof,
For corbel is a figure sometimes seen,
That crumples up its knees unto its breast,
With the feign'd posture stirring ruth unfeign'd
In the beholder's fancy; so I saw
These fashion'd, when I noted well their guise.
Each, as his back was laden, came indeed
Or more or less contracted; and it seemed
As he who show'd most patience in his look,
Wailing, exclaimed, "I can endure no more."

They gain a second cornice, where the sin of envy is purged, and then behold the shades of the envious clad in sackcloth, and having their eyes sewed up by an iron thread. Spirits of some citizens of his own land, whom Dante accosts, tell him of the sins that they expiate. An angel invites the poets to ascend the next steep, and at the next cornice, where the sin of anger is being purged, Dante witnesses remarkable instances of patience. One of these is described.

After that I saw
A multitude, in fury burning, slay
With stones a stripling youth, and shout amain
"Destroy, destroy!" And him I saw, who, bow'd
Heavy with death unto the ground, yet made
His eyes, unfolded upward, gates to heaven,
Praying forgiveness of the Almighty Sire,
Amidst that cruel conflict, on his foes,
With looks that win compassion to their aim.

A thick mist envelops the pilgrims, and through the fog the voices are heard of spirits piteously praying. An angel marshals them to the fourth cornice, on which the sin of indifference is purged. Multitudes of spirits rush by, shouting forth memorable examples of the sin for which they are made to suffer.

The moon, well nigh
To midnight hour belated, made the stars
Appear to wink and fade; and her broad disc
Seem'd like a crag on fire, as up the vault
That course she journeyed which the sun then warms
When they of Rome behold him at his set
Betwixt Sardinia and the Corsic isle.
And now the weight that hung upon my thought,
Was lighted by the aid of that clear spirit
Who raiseth Andes above Mantua's name,
And I stood musing in dreamy slumbers;
But not long, for sudden, a multitude,
The steep already turning from behind,
Rush'd on. With fury and like random rout,
(As echoing on their shores at midnight heard
Ismenus and Asopus, for his Thebes
If Bacchus' help were needed) so came these

Tumultuous, curving each his rapid step,
By eagerness impelled of holy love.
Soon they o'ertook us; with such swiftness moved
The mighty crowd. Two spirits at their head
Cried, weeping, "Blessed Mary sought with haste
The hilly region. Cæsar, to subdue
Ilerda, darted in Marseilles his sting,
And flew to Spain."—"Oh, tarry not: away!"
The others shouted, "Let not time be lost
Through slackness or affection. Hearty zeal
To serve reanimates celestial grace."

At the summoning of an angel, Virgil and Dante ascend the fifth cornice, where they find Pope Adrian the Fifth, who thus speaks:

"Late, alas!
Was my conversion; but when I became
Rome's pastor I discern'd at once the dream
And cozenage of life; saw that the heart
Rested not there, and yet no prouder height
Lur'd on the climber; wherefore, of that life
No more enamour'd, in my bosom love
Of purer being kindled. For till then
I was a soul in misery; alienate
From God, and covetous of all earthly things;
Now, as thou seest, here punish'd for my doting
Such cleansing from the taint of avarice
Do spirits, converted, need."

Presently the mountain shakes, and all the spirits shout: "Glory to God!" The poets mount to the sixth cornice, where the sin of gluttony is cleansed. Turning, they find a tree hung with sweet-smelling fruit, and watered by a shower that gushes from the rock. Verses are heard to proceed from the rock, recording examples of temperance.

"The women of old Rome were satisfied
With water for their beverage. Daniel fed
On pulse, and wisdom gain'd. The primal age
Was beautiful as gold; and hunger then
Made acorns tasteful, thirst each rivulet

Run nectar. Honey and locusts were the food
Whereon the Baptist in the wilderness
Fed, and that eminence of glory reach'd
And greatness, which th' Evangelist records."

They arrive on the seventh and last cornice, where the sin of incontinence is purged in fire. An angel sends the two pilgrims forward to the last ascent, which leads to the celestial Paradise, situated on the summits of the mountains. Virgil gives Dante full liberty to use his own pleasure and judgment in the choice of his way till he shall meet with Beatrice. Dante wanders through the forest of the terrestrial Paradise, till he is stopped by a stream. On the other side he beholds a fair lady, culling flowers. He speaks with her, and learns that the water flowing between them has power, on her side to take away remembrance of offence, and on the other to bring back remembrance of all good deeds; whence on the one side it is called Lethe, and on the other, Eunoe.

The dame, who in the last canto is called Matilda, moves along the side of the stream, in the opposite direction to the current, and Dante keeps equal pace with her on the opposite bank. A marvellous sight appears, preceded by music. Beatrice descends from heaven, and rebukes the poet.

I have beheld, ere now, at break of day,
The eastern clime all roseate, and the sky
Opposed, one deep and beautiful serene;
And the sun's face so shaded, and with mists
Attemper'd, at his rising, that the eye
Long while endured the sight; thus, in a cloud
Of flowers, that from those hands angelic rose,
And down within and outside of the car
Fell showering, in white veil with olive wreathed,
A virgin in my view appeared, beneath
Green mantle, robed in hue of living flame.
And o'er my spirit, that so long a time
Had from her presence felt no shuddering dread,
Albeit mine eyes discern'd her not, there moved
A hidden virtue from her, at whose touch
The power of ancient love was strong within me.

Then she, addressing Dante, exclaims:

"Observe me well. I am, in sooth, I am
Beatrice. What! and hast thou deign'd at last

Approach the mountain? Knewest not, O man,
Thy happiness is here?"

To the virgins accompanying her Beatrice explains the reason of her rebukes administered to Dante. After she had left this mortal vale he had languished in his devotion and his praise of her whom he had adulated while she lived within his ken on earth. She says:

"Soon as I had reach'd
The threshold of my second age, and changed
My mortal for immortal; then he left me,
And gave himself to others. When from flesh
To spirit I had risen, and increase
Of beauty and of virtue circled me
I was less dear to him, and valued less.
His steps were turned into deceitful ways,
Following false images of good, that make
No promise perfect."

Dante confesses his error, and falls to the ground. Coming to himself again, he is drawn by Matilda through the waters of Lethe, and presented first to the four virgins who figure the cardinal virtues. These in turn lead him to the Gryphon, a symbol of our Saviour; and three virgins representing the evangelical virtues intercede for him with Beatrice, that she would display to him her second beauty. She relents, and her virgins lead Dante up to where she stands gazing at the sacred symbol. But they warn him not to gaze on her too fixedly.

Mine eyes with such an eager coveting
Were bent to rid them of their ten years' thirst,
No other sense was waking, and e'en they
Were fenced on either side from heed of aught,—
So tangled, in its customed toils, that smile
Of saintly brightness drew me to itself;
When forcibly, toward my left, my sight
The sacred virgins turned; for from their lips
I heard the warning sounds, "Too fix'd a gaze!"
Awhile my vision laboured; as when late
Upon the o'erstrained eyes the sun hath smote.
But soon, to lesser object, as the view
Was now recover'd (lesser in respect

To that excess of sensible, whence late
I had perforce been sunder'd), on their right
I mark'd that glorious army wheel, and turn
Against the sun and sevenfold lights, their front.

Beatrice darkly predicts to Dante some future events. Lastly, the whole band arrive at a fountain, from which point the twin streams, Lethe and Eunoe, separating, flow different ways. Matilda, at the desire of Beatrice, causes Dante to drink of the latter stream, and the poem ends.

And, where they stood, before them, as it seemed
I, Tigris and Euphrates both beheld
Forth from one fountain issue; and, like friends,
Linger at parting. "O enlight'ning beam!
O glory of our kind! beseech thee say
What water this, which from one source derived
Itself removes to distance from itself?"
  To such entreaty answer thus was made:
"Entreat Matilda, that she teach thee this."
  And here, as one who clears himself of blame
Imputed, the fair dame return'd, "Of me
He this and more hath learnt; and I am safe
That Lethe's water hath not hid it from him."
  And Beatrice: "Some more pressing care,
That oft the memory leaves, perchance hath made
His mind's eye dark. But lo, where Eunoe flows!
Lead thither; and, as thou art wont, revive
His fainting virtue." As a courteous spirit,
That proffers no excuses, but as soon
As he hath token of another's will,
Makes it his own, when she had ta'en me, thus
The lovely maiden moved her on . . . .
  Were further space allowed,
Then, reader, might I sing, though but in part,
That beverage, with whose sweetness I had ne'er
Been sated. But, since all the leaves are full,
Appointed for this second strain, mine art
With warning bridle checks me. I return'd

From the most holy wave, regenerate,
E'en as new plants renew'd with foliage new,
Pure and made apt for mounting to the stars.

III.—Paradiso

Beatrice, whose glorious spirit has disclosed its grace and beauty to Dante in the mountain of Purgatory, where she had admonished him concerning his errors, and had brought him to acknowledge them, leads him in an ascent towards the first heaven. She also ministers to his soul profound consolation and high enlightenment by relieving him of some of his most perplexing and distressing doubts. Dante and his celestial guide enter the moon. The cause of the spots or shadows which appear in that satellite is explained to him.

"The virtue and motion of the sacred orbs,
A mallet by the workman's hand, must needs
By blessed movers be inspired. This heaven,
Made beauteous by so many luminaries,
From the deep spirit that moves its circling sphere
Its image takes in impress as a seal;
And as the soul, that dwells within your dust,
Through members different, yet together form'd,
In different powers resolves itself, e'en so
The intellectual efficacy unfolds

The "Paradiso," the third section of Dante's "Divina Commedia," is distinguished by its harmony with that accent of chivalry which formed one of the characteristics of this age. One of the effects of this sentiment was an entire transformation in the ideals of sex that had slowly overspread Christendom. The poem embodies a presentation of the final development of that ideal—namely, the apotheosis of Mary, from the Mother of Jesus to the Mother of God. Throughout the "Divine Comedy," but especially in the "Paradiso," the poet reflects the great age in which he lived with unprecedented intensity of observation and breadth of interpretation. But the unique characteristic of Dante's poetry is the enthralling ecstasy of the purest and holiest power—love. This fills all his life and transfigures the universe before his eyes. It is personified in Beatrice; yet, while it becomes his master, his reason seeks to know the origin and nature of this new ruler of his heart and mind. Hence that interweaving of passion and philosophy in which Dante transcended all other poets.

Its goodness multiplied throughout the stars,
On its own unity revolving still.
Different virtue compact different
Makes with the precious body it enlivens,
With which it knits, as life in you is knit.
From its original nature full of joy,
The virtue mingled through the body shines,
As joy through pupil of the living eye,
From hence proceeds that which from light to light
Seems different, and not from dense or rare.
This is the formal cause, that generates,
Proportion'd to its power, the dusk or clear."

In the moon Dante learns that this satellite is allotted to those who, after having made profession of chastity and a religious life, had been compelled to violate their vows. Dante ascends with Beatrice to the planet Mercury, which is the second heaven, and here he finds a multitude of spirits, one of whom offers to satisfy him of anything he may wish to know from him. This spirit declares himself to be the Emperor Justinian, and after speaking of his own actions, recounts the victories, before him, gained under the Roman Eagle.

"Cæsar I was,
And am Justinian; destined by the will
Of that prime love, whose influence I feel,
From vain excess to clear th' incumber'd laws.
Or e'er that work engaged me, I did hold
In Christ one nature only; with such faith
Contented. But the blessed Agapete,
Who was chief shepherd, he with warning voice
To the true faith recall'd me. I believed
His words, and what he taught, now plainly see,
As thou in every contradiction seest
The true and false opposed. Soon as my feet
Were to the church reclaim'd, to my great task,
By inspiration of God's grace impell'd,
I gave me wholly, and consign'd mine arms
To Belisarius, with whom Heaven's right hand
Was link'd in such conjointment 'twas a sign
That I should rest."

Then follows an historic summary, after which Justinian proceeds:

"This little star is furnish'd with good spirits,
Whose mortal lives were busied to that end,
That honour and renown might wait on them;
And, when desires thus err in their intention,
True love must needs ascend with slacker beam.
But it is part of our delight to measure
Our wages with the merit; and admire
The close proportion. Hence doth heav'nly justice
Temper so evenly affection in us,
It ne'er can warp to any wrongfulness.

But the discourse of Justinian raises some doubts in Dante's mind respecting human redemption. Beatrice fully explains these difficulties. Then she conducts the poet to the third heaven, the planet Venus. Here he finds the soul of Charles Martel, King of Hungary, who had been his friend on earth, and who now after speaking of the realms to which he had been heir, unfolds the cause why children differ in disposition from their parents.

"The roots from whence your operations come
Must differ. Therefore one is Solon born;
Another, Xerxes; and Melchisidec
A third; and he a fourth whose airy voyage
Cost him his son. In her circuitous course,
Nature, that is the seal to mortal wax,
Doth well her art, but no distinction owns
'Twixt one or other household. Hence befalls
That Esau is so wide of Jacob; hence
Quirinus of so base a father springs,
He dates from Mars his lineage. Were it not
That Providence celestial over-rul'd,
Nature, in generation, must the path
Traced by the generator still pursue
Unswervingly. Thus place I in thy sight
That which was late behind thee."

In this planet various spirits speak to Dante. Folco, the Provençal bard, tells him that the spirit of Rahab the harlot is there.

"Inquire thou wouldst,
Who of this light is denizen, that here
Besides me sparkles, as the sunbeam doth
On the clear wave. Know, then, the soul of Rahab
Is in that gladsome harbour; to our tribe
United, and the foremost rank assign'd.
She to this heav'n, at which the shadow ends
Of your sublunar world, was taken up
First in Christ's triumph, of all souls redeem'd;
For well behoved that in some part of heav'n
She should remain, a trophy, to declare
The might conquest won with either palm;[1]
For that she favoured first the high exploit
Of Joshua on the Holy Land, whereof
The Pope recks little now."

The next ascent carries them into the sun, which is the fourth heaven. Here they are encompassed with a wreath of blessed spirits, twelve in number. Thomas Aquinas, one of them, declares the names and endowments of the rest. Dante describes the first sight.

Then saw I a bright band, in loveliness
Surpassing, who themselves did make the crown,
And thus the centre; yet more sweet in voice
Than in their visage, beaming. Cinctured thus,
Sometime Latona's daughter we behold,
When the impregnate air retains the thread
That weaves her zone.
In the celestial court,
Whence I return, are many jewels found,
So dear and beautiful they cannot brook
Transporting from that realm; and of these lights
Such was the song.

Dante penetrates various circles of glorified spirits. Solomon, who is one of the spirits in the inner circle, declares what the appearance of the body will be after the resurrection. Then

[1] By both hands nailed to the cross.

Beatrice and Dante are translated into the fifth heaven, the planet Mars; and here behold the souls of those who had died fighting for the true faith, ranged as a cross, athwart which the spirits move to the sound of a melodious hymn.

O genuine glitter of eternal Beam!
With what a sudden whiteness did it flow,
O'erpowering vision in me. But so fair,
So passing lovely, Beatrice show'd,
Mind cannot follow it, nor words express
Her infinite sweetness. Thence mine eyes regain'd
Power to look up; and I beheld myself,
Sole with my lady, to more lofty bliss
Translated.

Dante ascends with Beatrice to the planet Jupiter, the sixth heaven, where he finds the souls of those who had administered justice rightly in the world. A marvellous apparition amazes the poet in form of a mighty and glorious eagle, composed of a multitude of heavenly spirits. It spoke to Dante with the united voice of these glorified ones, discoursing of the cause of its exaltation to that glory.

Before my sight appear'd, with open wings,
The beauteous image, in fruition sweet,
Gladdening the thronged spirits. That which next
Befalls me to portray voice hath not utter'd,
Nor hath ink written, nor in fantasy
Was e'er conceived. For I beheld and heard
The beak discourse; and what intention form'd
Of many, singly as of one express,
Beginning, "For that I was just and piteous,
I am exalted to this height of glory,
The which no wish exceeds: and there on earth
Have I my memory left, e'en by the bad
Commended, while they leave its course untrod."

The eagle celebrates the praise of certain kings, whose glorified spirits form the eye of the bird. In the pupil is David, and in the circle round it, Trajan, Hezekiah, Constantine, William II. of Sicily, and Ripheus. It explains to the poet how the souls of those whom he supposed to have had no means of

believing in Christ came to be in heaven; and concludes with an admonition against presuming to fathom the counsels of God.

Dante ascends with Beatrice to the seventh heaven, the planet Saturn, where are the souls of those who had passed their life in holy contemplation. Next he mounts with his heavenly conductress to the eighth heaven, that of the fixed stars; and thence looking back reviews all the space he has passed between his present station and earth. He sees Christ triumphing with His Church. The Saviour ascends, followed by His virgin mother, and Dante in the ninth heaven is permitted to behold the divine essence. He is taken up with Beatrice into the empyrean, and there he sees the triumph of the angels and saintly multitude of the souls of the blessed in fashion as a snow-white rose. Lastly, he is admitted to a glimpse of the great mystery, the Trinity, and the Union of Man with God. The concluding passage of the poem descants on this mystery.

In that abyss
Of radiance, clear and lofty, seem'd, methought,
Three orbs of triple hue, clipt in one bound;
And, from another, one reflected seem'd,
As rainbow is from rainbow; and the third
Seem'd fire breath'd equally from both. O speech!
How feeble and how faint art thou to give
Conception birth. Yet this to what I saw
Is less than little. O eternal light!
Sole in thyself that dwell'st; and of thyself
Sole understand past, present, or to come;
Thou smiledst on that circling, which in thee
Seem'd as reflected splendour, while I mus'd;
For I therein, methought, in its own hue
Beheld our image painted: steadfastly
I therefore pored upon the view. As one
Who, vers'd in geometric lore, would fain
Measure the circle, and, though pondering long
And deeply, that beginning, which he needs,
Finds not; e'en such was I, intent to scan
The novel wonder, and trace out the form,
How to the circle fitted, and therein
How placed: but the flight was not for my wing;
Had not a flash darted athwart my mind,

And, in the spleen, unfolded what it sought.
  Here vigour fail'd the tow'ring fantasy;
But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel
In even motion, by the Love impell'd,
That moves the sun in heaven and all the stars.

JOHN DRYDEN

All for Love

Persons in the Drama

MARC ANTONY
VENTIDIUS, *his general*
DOLABELLA, *his friend*
ALEXAS, *the queen's eunuch*
SERAPION, *priest of Iris*
CLEOPATRA, *Queen of Egypt*
OCTAVIA, *wife to Antony*
CHARMION *and* IRAS, *maids to Cleopatra*
ANTONY'S *two young daughters*

ACT I

SCENE: *Alexandria.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, IRAS, *and a train of Egyptians;* ANTONY *and Romans;* CLEOPATRA *crowns* ANTONY.

ANTONY: I thought how those white arms would strain me close;
So, pleased with that sweet image, I sprung forwards,

John Dryden, the great satirist and dramatist of post-Restoration times, was born on August 9, 1631, at Alwinkle All Saints, in Northamptonshire, England, and, though he came of an old family, the head of which held a baronetcy, his connections on both sides belonged to the Puritan and Parliamentary parties. Dryden married, in 1663, Lady Elizabeth Howard, eldest daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, and for the next twenty years subsisted partly on a small patrimony, partly on his salary as Poet Laureate—a position which he held from 1670 to the Revolution—and to a considerable extent on the

And added all my strength to every blow.
My brighter Venus!

CLEOPATRA: Oh, my greater Mars!

[*Enter* VENTIDIUS, *who stands apart.*

ANTONY: Lead to the temple; I'll avoid his presence.

[*Exeunt the rest. As* ANTONY *is going* VENTIDIUS *pulls him by the robe.*

VENTIDIUS: I bring you something you would wish to know.

ANTONY: Thou seest we are observed; attend me here.
And I'll return. [*Exit.*

VENTIDIUS: I love this man who runs to meet his ruin!
And surely the gods, like me, are fond of him.
His virtues lie so mingled with his crimes,
As would confound their choice to punish one,
And not reward the other.

[*Enter* ANTONY.

ANTONY: We can conquer,
You see, without your aid, Ventidius.
Five thousand Romans, with their faces upward,
Lie breathless on the plain.

VENTIDIUS: 'Tis well; and he
Who lost them could have spared ten thousand more;

---

income he derived from his work as playwright. On May 1, 1700, Dryden died, leaving to his credit some thirty plays, satires and other poems, translations from the Latin, and admirable essays in criticism. "All for Love, or the World Well Lost"—Dryden's greatest blank verse play—was produced in the beginning of 1678. In his preface to the play, Dryden admits: "In my style I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare, which, that I might perform freely, I have disencumbered myself from rhyme"; and he confesses that it was "the only play written for myself; the rest were given to the people." For comedy, Dryden never showed any decided bent, but his fine blank verse tragedy, "Don Sebastian," deserves mention, while among his rhymed heroic plays the two parts of "The Conquest of Granada," and "Aurengzebe, or the Great Mogul," stand pre-eminent. In two tragedies, a version of "Œdipus" and "The Duke of Guise," Dryden collaborated with Nathaniel Lee, while in "The Spanish Friar" he probably produced the least unsatisfactory of all his comedies.

Yet if by this advantage you could gain
An easier peace, while Cæsar doubts the chance
Of arms——

ANTONY: Oh, think not on't, Ventidius!
The boy pursues my ruin; he'll no peace.

VENTIDIUS: In all his army have you none to move him?
Mæcenas or Agrippa might do much.

ANTONY: They're both too deep in Cæsar's interests.

VENTIDIUS: Fain I would find some other.

ANTONY: Thank my love.
Some four or five such victories as this
Will save thy further pains.

VENTIDIUS: Expect no more; Cæsar is on his guard.

ANTONY: Why dost thou drive me from myself to search
For foreign aids? The wretched have no friends.
Yet I had one, the bravest youth of Rome,
Whom Cæsar loves beyond the love of women.

VENTIDIUS: Him would I see, that man of all the world!

ANTONY: I was his soul; he lived not but in me:
We were so closed within each other's breasts.
We were one mass: we could not give or take
But from the same; for he was I, I he.
I need not tell his name: 'twas Dolabella.

VENTIDIUS: He's now in Cæsar's camp.

ANTONY: No matter where,
Since he's no longer mine. He took unkindly
That I forbade him Cleopatra's sight,
Because I feared he loved her.

VENTIDIUS: He loves you.

ANTONY: Would he were here!

VENTIDIUS: Not to conceal it longer, he has sent
A messenger from Cæsar's camp with letters.

[*Exit* VENTIDIUS, *who re-enters immediately with* DOLABELLA.

ANTONY: 'Tis he himself! himself by holy friendship!
Come, give me all thyself! [*Runs to embrace him.*
Thou find'st me at my lowest watermark:
The rivers that ran in and raised my fortunes
Are all dried up, or take another course.
What I have left is from my native spring.
DOLABELLA: Still you are lord of all the world to me.
ANTONY: Why, then, I yet am so, for thou art all!
If I had any joy, when thou wert absent,
I grudged it to myself; methought I robbed
Thee of thy part. But, O my Dolabella,
Fortune is Cæsar's now; and what am I?
VENTIDIUS: What you have made yourself.
ANTONY: Is this friendly done?
DOLABELLA: Yes, when his end is so. I must join with him,
Indeed I must, and yet you must not chide.
ANTONY: Take heed, young man, how thou upbraid'st my love!
The queen has eyes, and thou, too, hast a soul.
When, swelled with hatred, thou beheldst her first,
As accessory to thy brother's death,
Was not thy fury quite disarmed with wonder?
DOLABELLA: Mine was an age when love might be excused;
Should then my weakness be a plea for yours?
VENTIDIUS: Yours, he would say, in your declining age,
When no more heat was left but what you forced,
When all the sap was needful for the trunk.
ANTONY: This from a friend?
DOLABELLA: Yes, Antony, a true one.
To Cæsar I excuse you.
ANTONY: Have I lived to be excused to Cæsar?
DOLABELLA: I bring conditions from him.
ANTONY: Are they noble?
Methinks thou shouldst not bring them else; yet he

Is full of deep dissembling, knows no honour
Divided from his interest.

DOLABELLA: Granting this,
What power was theirs, who wrought so hard a temper
To honourable terms?

ANTONY: It was my Dolabella, or some god.

DOLABELLA: Not I, nor yet Mæcenas or Agrippa;
Yet 'twas a Roman deed.

ANTONY: Show me who has preserved my life, love, honour?
Let me but see his face!

VENTIDIUS: That task is mine.
And, heaven, thou knowest how pleasing!

[*Exit* VENTIDIUS.

DOLABELLA: You won't forget to whom you stand obliged?

ANTONY: Be thou unkind, and that's my greatest curse,
When I forget it.

[*Re-enter* VENTIDIUS *with* OCTAVIA, *leading* ANTONY'S *two little daughters.*

What, Octavia! [*Starting back.*

VENTIDIUS: What! Is she poison to you?

OCTAVIA: Thus long I have attended for my welcome,
Which, as a stranger, sure I might expect. Who am I?

ANTONY: Cæsar's sister.

OCTAVIA: That's unkind!
Had I been nothing more than Cæsar's sister,
Know I had still remained in Cæsar's camp.
But as Octavia, your much injured wife,
I ask your hand, my lord, and I will have it.

[*Taking his hand.*

VENTIDIUS: Do take it, thou deserv'st it.

ANTONY: I fear, Octavia, you have begged my life.
Poorly and basely begged it of your brother.

OCTAVIA: No. The conditions I have brought are such
You need not blush to take. I love your honour,

Because 'tis mine. It never shall be said
Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.
For though my brother bargains for your love,
Makes me the price and cement of your peace,
I have a soul like yours. I cannot take
Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
I'll tell my brother we are reconciled;
He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
To rule the East: I may be dropt at Athens.
Come, come, my lord, if I can pardon you,
Methinks you should accept it. Look on these:
Are they not yours? Or stand they thus neglected
As they are mine? [*The children go to him.*

DOLABELLA: Friend!

VENTIDIUS: Emperor!

OCTAVIA: Husband!

CHILDREN: Father!

ANTONY: Octavia, take me; children (*embracing them*), share me all;
I've been a thriftless debtor to your loves,
But all shall be amended.

OCTAVIA: Oh, blest hour!

ANTONY (*to* OCTAVIA): This is thy triumph; lead me where thou wilt;
E'en to thy brother's camp.

OCTAVIA: All there are yours. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

Enter ANTONY *and* DOLABELLA.

DOLABELLA: Why would you shift it from yourself on me?
Can you not tell her you must part?

ANTONY: I cannot.

DOLABELLA: Nature has cast me in so soft a mould,
So faintly should I speak, and with such fear,
She'd not believe it earnest!

ANTONY: Therefore, therefore,
Thou only thou art fit. Think thyself me.
Take off the edge from every sharper sound.
I leave you then to your sad task. Farewell.
[*Goes to the door, and comes back.*
I forgot;
Let her be told, I'll make her peace with mine;
Her crown and dignity shall be preserved,
If I have power with Cæsar.
DOLABELLA: Fear not, I will remember.
[ANTONY *goes again to the door, and comes back.*
ANTONY: And tell her, too, how much I was constrained;
Desire her not to hate my memory.
[*Goes out, and returns again.*
Wilt thou forgive my fondness this once more?
Tell her, though we shall never meet again,
If I should hear she took another love
The news would break my heart. Now I must go.
[*Exit. Enter* CLEOPATRA, *talking with* ALEXAS; CHARMION, IRAS *on the other side.*
DOLABELLA: She comes! What charms have sorrow on that face!
[*Goes over to* CHARMION *and* IRAS: *seems to talk with them.*
ALEXAS: Believe me, try
To make him jealous. Jealousy is like
A polished glass held to the lips when life's in doubt;
If there be breath, 'twill catch the damp and show it.
CLEOPATRA: It puts out the disease, and makes it show,
But has no power to cure.
ALEXAS: 'Tis your last remedy, and strongest too.
[*Exit* ALEXAS. CLEOPATRA *approaches* DOLABELLA.
CLEOPATRA: Discoursing with my women? Might not I
Share in your entertainment?

DOLABELLA: You have been
The subject of it, madam.
IRAS: Such praises of your beauty!
CLEOPATRA: Mere poetry!
I'm sure your friend would not have you speak so.
DOLABELLA: He sent me on a far less pleasing errand.
CLEOPATRA: You, Charmion, and your fellow, stand at distance;
(*Aside*) Hold up, my spirits. Now, your mournful matter,
For I'm prepared; perhaps can guess at it!
DOLABELLA: I wish you would; for 'tis a thankless office
To tell ill news; and I, of all your sex,
Most fear displeasing you.
CLEOPATRA: Of all your sex,
I soonest could forgive you, if you should.
[*Enter* VENTIDIUS.
VENTIDIUS: Most delicate advances! Woman, Woman! Dear, cursed, inconstant sex!
CLEOPATRA: In the first place, I am to be forsaken;
Next, I'm to lose my kingdom—farewell, Egypt! Yet is there more?
DOLABELLA: You o'erjoy me, madam,
To find your grief so moderately borne.
You've heard the worst. But some men still are constant.
CLEOPATRA: For this task were you chosen by my lord?
DOLABELLA: He picked me out as being his bosom friend.
CLEOPATRA: The message tender, and each accent smooth?
DOLABELLA: Oh, you mistake; he chose the harshest words:
"Let her be driven as far as men can think
From man's commerce. She'll poison to the centre."

[*At the end of this speech* CLEOPATRA *sinks down.*

CHARMION: Help! chafe her temples, Iras. Heaven be praised,
She comes again!

CLEOPATRA: Oh, let him not approach me.
Why have you brought me back to this loathed being,
Th' abode of falsehood, violated vows?

DOLABELLA (*kneeling*): I injured him: my friend ne'er spoke those words.
I, traitor as I was, for love of you,
I forged that cursed lie. Oh, had you seen
How often he came back, and every time
With something more obliging and more kind!

CLEOPATRA: Rise, Dolabella; if you have been guilty,
I have contributed, from too much love.
The advance of kindness which I made was feigned,
To call back fleeting love by jealousy.
Give me admittance to his private ear.

DOLABELLA: I will for this reward.
[*Takes her hand.*
Draw it not back;
'Tis all I e'er will beg!

[*Exeunt* DOLABELLA *and* CLEOPATRA. *Enter* VENTIDIUS *and* OCTAVIA, *followed by* ANTONY.

ANTONY: Octavia, I was looking for you, love;
What, are your letters ready?

OCTAVIA: Mine, my lord, are written.

ANTONY: Ventidius! (*drawing him aside*)
When saw you Dolabella?

VENTIDIUS: Just now he left, and Cleopatra with him.

ANTONY: Speak softly. 'Twas by my command he went
To bear my last farewell.

VENTIDIUS: Then he obeyed your orders, I suppose.

ANTONY: The poor forsaken creature; how she mourned!

VENTIDIUS: She took it as she ought; she bore your parting.
As she did Cæsar's; as she would another's,
Were a new love to come.
ANTONY: Thou dost belie her.
VENTIDIUS: Young Dolabella went by your command.
I may suppose, with some kind messages;
For she received him graciously. She smiled;
And then he grew familiar with her hand,
Squeezed it, and worried it with ravenous kisses.
She blushed and sighed, and smiled, and blushed again.
ANTONY: Though Heaven and earth
Should witness it, I'll not believe her tainted.
VENTIDIUS: I'll bring you, then, a witness
From Hell to prove her so. Nay, go not back!

[*Seeing* ALEXAS *just entering, and starting back,*

I did myself o'erhear your queen make love
To Dolabella. Speak; for I will know
By your confession what more passed between them.
ANTONY: Speak truth, Alexas.
VENTIDIUS: The emperor has given thee leave to speak.
ALEXAS: Else had I never dared t'offend his ears
With what the last necessity has urged
On my forsaken mistress. Dolabella
Has loved her long; and should she meet his passion,
Rejected as she is by him she loved——
ANTONY: Hence from my sight; for I can bear no more!
Let furies drag thee quick to Hell!

[*Exit* ALEXAS, *thrust out by* ANTONY.

OCTAVIA: You would mourn
In private for your love who has betrayed you.
I fear, my lord, you make conditions for her,
And would include her treaty; wondrous proofs
Of love to me!

ANTONY: Are you my friend, Ventidius?
Or are you turned a Dolabella too?
VENTIDIUS: Oh, be advised,
Sweet madam, and retire.
OCTAVIA: My lord, my lord! love will not always last,
When urged with long unkindness and disdain.
To the dear pledges of our former love
My tenderness and care shall be transferred;
So take my last farewell! For I despair
To have you whole, and scorn to take you half.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III

To ANTONY *and* VENTIDIUS, *who, having heard that the Egyptian galleys have gone over to the Romans, determine to make a last desperate attack on* OCTAVIUS *with the three legions left to them, enter* ALEXAS.

ANTONY: No syllable to justify the queen;
Save thy base tongue its office.
ALEXAS: Sir, she's gone.
ANTONY: Fled to her Dolabella!
Die, traitor, die! [*Going to kill him.*
ALEXAS: Oh, hold, she is not fled.
Had she betrayed her naval force to Rome
How easily might she have gone to Cæsar,
Secure by such a bribe.
VENTIDIUS: She sent it first,
To be more welcome after.
ANTONY: 'Tis too plain,
Else would she have appeared to clear herself.
ALEXAS: Too fatally she has; she could not bear
To be accused by you, but snatched her poignard,
And ere we could prevent the fatal blow
Plunged it within her breast.
ANTONY: Then thou art innocent, my poor dear love!

VENTIDIUS: Come, rouse yourself, and let's die warm together.

ANTONY: I will convey my soul from Cæsar's reach,
And lay down life myself.

VENTIDIUS: I swear I'll not outlive you. Choose your death.

ANTONY: Wilt thou not live to stand by my fair fame?

VENTIDIUS: Who shall guard mine for living after you?

ANTONY: Kill me first,
And then die thou; for 'tis but just thou serve
Thy friend before thyself.

VENTIDIUS: Give me your hand.

[*They embrace.*

Since death sweeps all distinctions, farewell, friend!
That's all——
And yet I cannot look on you and kill you.
Pray turn your face.

ANTONY: I do: strike home; be sure.

VENTIDIUS: Home as my sword will reach.

[*Kills himself.*

ANTONY: Oh, thou mistak'st:
That wound was none of thine; give it me back.
Farewell! ever my leader, even in death.
My queen and thou have got the start of me,
And I'm the lag of honour.
No further thought; for death for aught I know,
Is but to think no more. Here's to be satisfied.

[*Falls on his sword.*

[*Enter* CLEOPATRA, CHARMION, *and* IRAS.

CLEOPATRA: Where is my lord?

CHARMION: There he lies,
And dead Ventidius by him!

CLEOPATRA: Help me seat him!

[*They place him in a chair.*

How is it, with you, love?

ANTONY: 'Tis as with a man
Removing in a hurry; all packed up
But one dear jewel, that his haste forgot,
And he for that returns upon the spur;
So I come back for thee. Say thou'rt not false.
CLEOPATRA: 'Tis now too late
To say I'm true; I'll prove it, and die with you.
Unknown to me, Alexas feigned my death,
Which, when I knew, I hasted to prevent
This fatal consequence. My fleet betrayed
Both you and me.
ANTONY: And Dolabella?
CLEOPATRA: I but blew up the fire that scorched his soul,
To make you jealous, and by that regain you.
ANTONY: Enough! my life's not long enough for more.
Thou say'st thou wilt come after: I believe thee.
Grieve not meanwhile my last disastrous times.
Think we have had a clear and glorious day,
And heaven did kindly to delay the storm.
CLEOPATRA: Your words are like the notes of dying swans,
Too sweet to last. Were there so many hours
For your unkindness, and not one for love!
ANTONY: No, not a minute—this one kiss—more worth
Than all I leave to Cæsar. [*Dies.*
CLEOPATRA: Oh, tell me so again,
And take ten thousand kisses for that word!
Sign to me if you cannot speak! Or cast
One look! do anything that shows you live!
CHARMION: He charged you not to grieve.
CLEOPATRA: And I'll obey him.
I have not loved a Roman not to know
What should become his wife—his wife my Charmion!
For 'tis to that high title I aspire;
And now I'll not die less.
You Charmion, bring my crown and richest jewels;

With them the wreath of victory I made
(Vain augury!) for him who now lies dead.
You, Iras, bring the cure of all our ills.
[*Exeunt* CHARMION *and* IRAS.
I'll rush into the dark abode of death,
And seize him first! If he be like my love
He is not frightful, sure!
[*Enter* CHARMION *and* IRAS *with aspicks in a basket, etc.*
CHARMION: What must be done?
CLEOPATRA: First this laurel
Shall crown my hero's head; he fell not basely
Nor left his shield behind him.
CHARMION: To what end
These ensigns of your pomp and royalty?
CLEOPATRA: Dull that thou art! Why, 'tis to meet my love,
As when I saw him first on Cydnus' bank,
All sparkling like a goddess. Haste, haste, both,
And dress the bride of Antony!
CHARMION: 'Tis done.
CLEOPATRA: Now seat me by my lord. I claim this place,
For I must conquer Cæsar, too, like him.
IRAS: Lo, underneath the fruit the aspick lies.
CLEOPATRA: Welcome, thou kind deceiver!
[*Putting aside the leaves.*
Thou best of thieves! Who with an easy key
Dost open life, and, unperceived by us,
Ev'n steal us from ourselves.
SERAPION (*outside*): The queen, where is she?
The town is yielded, Cæsar's at the gates.
CLEOPATRA: He comes too late to invade the nights of death.
Haste, bare my arm and rouse the serpent's fury.
[*Holds out her arm, and draws it back.*
Coward flesh——
Wouldst thou conspire with Cæsar to betray me?

[*Turns aside, and then shows her arm bloody.*
Take hence, the work is done.

SERAPION (*outside*): Break open the door, and guard the traitor well.

IRAS: Now, Charmion, to be worthy of our queen.
[*They apply the aspicks.*

CLEOPATRA: I go with such a will to find my lord
That we shall quickly meet.
A heavy numbness creeps through every limb,
And now 'tis at my head. Oh, turn me to him,
And lay me on his breast! Cæsar thy worst!
Now part us if thou canst. [*Dies.*

[IRAS *sinks down at her feet and dies;* CHARMION *stands behind her chair. Enter* SERAPION, *two priests,* ALEXAS *bound, and Egyptians.*

SERAPION: Charmion, is this well done?

CHARMION: Yes, 'tis well done, and like a queen, the last
Of her great race. Behold! I follow her.
[*Sinks down and dies.*

ALEXAS: She has done well: much better to die
Than live to make a holiday in Rome.

SERAPION: See how the lovers sit in state together,
As they were giving laws to half mankind!
The impression of a smile, left in her face,
Shows she died pleased with him for whom she lived,
And went to charm him in another world.

EURIPIDES

Alcestis

Persons in the Drama

APOLLO
DEATH
ADMETUS, *King of Pheræ in Thessaly*
ALCESTIS, *wife of Admetus*
EUMELUS, *son of Admetus and Alcestis*
PHERES, *aged father of Admetus*
HERACLES
CHORUS, *Elders of Pheræ*
Attendants, Handmaids, Guards, Mourners

ACT I

SCENE: *At Pheræ, before the palace of* ADMETUS.

DEATH: *Thou* here! What means it? Wherefore dost thou haunt
These halls, Apollo? Thou dost wrong anew,
The infernal powers restricting of their meed,
And checking them. Sufficed it not for thee
T' have fenced Admetus from his doom, the Fates

Euripides, the youngest of the three tragic dramatists of Greece who are represented by complete plays, was born at Salamis, near Athens, in 480 B.C. He first produced a play in 455, and won his first tragic prize in 441. We have eighteen of at least seventy-five plays by him. In his old age he retired from Athens, and died in Macedonia in 406 B.C. Towards the traditional religion of Greece his attitude was sceptical and critical. Yet his free handling of legend suggests not so much the irreverent atheism sometimes alleged against him, as a straining after loftier ideals in theology. The "Alcestis," produced in 438 B.C., is typical of the author's manner. It has tragic situations without a tragic end; it lacks the poignancy of

With guileful art deluding? Now again
Armed with thy bow, thou must defend his wife,
Daughter of Pelias, who hath pledged herself
As ransom for her lord to die for him.

APOLLO: Fear not; for I have justice and fair words.

DEATH: If thou hast justice, what the need of bow?

APOLLO: It ever is my wont to bear such arms.

DEATH: Yea, and unjustly to assist this house.

APOLLO: I mourn the afflictions of the man I love.

DEATH: What! Wilt thou rob me of this second corpse?

APOLLO: I did not take the first from thee by force.

DEATH: How then is he on earth and not below?

APOLLO: His wife redeemed him—and for her thou com'st.

DEATH: And I will lead her to the nether realm.

APOLLO: Then may Alcestis never reach old age?

DEATH: No; be assured I like my honours too.

APOLLO: Then wilt thou not indulge me with this grace?

DEATH: Nay, truly: thou dost understand my ways.

APOLLO: Yes, hateful unto men, and loathed by gods.

DEATH: Talk much thou may'st: thou wilt no profit win.

This woman shall go down to Hades' halls.

[*Exeunt;* DEATH *passing into the palace.*

The Chorus enters the orchestra chanting lyrics on the hopeless shadow of doom which has fallen on the royal house.

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his "Medea," but it raises abundant problems. While the noble wifehood of Alcestis must appeal to any age, it is certain that some readers will feel disposed to criticise her husband by chivalrous standards, and to criticise Heracles by standards of tragic seriousness, which, however, cannot be rigorously exacted from what was produced as a light after-piece. Except for a few adaptations in the "Alcestis' from earlier translations, the epitome and verse renderings here given have been specially prepared for THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS by Prof. J. Wight Duff.

In vain, our pious vows are vain:
  Make we the flying sail our care,
The light bark bounding o'er the main,
  To what new realm shall we repair?
To Lycia's hallowed strand?
  Or where in solitary state,
'Mid thirsty deserts wild and wide,
That close him round on every side,
  Prophetic Ammon holds his awful seat?
What charm, what potent hand
  Shall save her from the realms beneath?
  He comes, the ruthless tyrant, Death.
I have no priest, no tyrant more,
Whose aid I may implore.

After an antistrophe in response, a handmaid from the palace relates the tearful resignation and adieus of the queen. Then the dying Alcestis is borne out by serving-women, accompanied by Admetus and their children.

ALCESTIS: O Sun, O darling light of day,
Ye whirling clouds that wheel in heaven your way!
ADMETUS: He seeth thee and me, two sufferers
Who nowise wronged the gods, that thou should'st die.
ALCESTIS: I see a barge that with twin oars is sped.
'Tis Charon at the Ferry of the Dead;
And the ferryman calls me—his oar in his hand—
"Why so slow? Thou must haste!" is his urgent command.
ADMETUS: Ah, me! A bitter voyage thou dost name.
O ill-starred lady, what a fate is ours!
ALCESTIS: One pulls me, pulls me—seest not thou?
  To the home of the Dead.
A winged phantom glares 'neath darkling brow:
What would'st thou? Loose me! What a path of woe
  I tread!
ADMETUS: Woeful unto thy friends, but most to me
And to thy children, partners of my grief.

ALCESTIS: Let be—and let me lie.
Here lay me; for my feet are done;
Hades is nigh.
Upon my eyes creeps murky night;
Henceforth, my children, mother ye have none:
Long be ye blest, my babes, to look upon the light.
ADMETUS: Ah, me! Full bitter words to hear;
Anguish of death were less severe.
ALCESTIS: Thou seest, Admetus, what to me the Fates
Assign; yet, ere I die, I wish to tell
What lies most near my heart. I honoured thee,
And in exchange for thine my forfeit life
Devoted; now for thee I die, though free
Not to have died, but from Thessalia's chiefs
Preferring whom I pleased, in royal state,
To have lived happy here, I had no will
To live with these poor orphans, reft of thee.
I die without reluctance, though such gifts
Of youth are mine as might make life a joy.
Requite this kindness; never shall I ask
An equal retribution—nothing bears
A value high as life; yet my request
Is just, thou wilt confess it; for thy love
To these our children equals mine, thy soul
If wisdom tempers. In their mother's house
Let them be lords: wed not again, to set
A step-dame o'er my children, some one who
May be a worse wife: she through jealousy
Will on our children lay a heavy hand.
Do no such deed, I do entreat of thee.
For to the offspring of the former wife
A step-dame comes as sharp as viper's tooth.

Reassured by the king's promise that no other bride will ever call him husband, Alcestis dies. The boy Eumelus breaks into laments over his mother, and Admetus commands mourning throughout his realms for twelve months. The Chorus sings her praises.

Fare thee well, good and fair, Pelias's noble heir,
Thy course is done;
Good and gracious things betide thee,
In the dark mansion that must hide thee
From yon fair sun.
The sovereign of the realm, and he that at the helm
Steers in the murky stream his dusky wherry
(Wafting the feeble sprites that flit below),
Shall hear and know
That never did a nobler spirit pass
The infernal ferry.

At this point Heracles arrives. He is bound for Thrace on a dangerous quest imposed by his task-master Eurystheus. He greets Admetus, and noticing signs of mourning, is answered by him in such riddling fashion that he believes that it is some alien woman who has died in the palace. Admetus insists that the traveller shall accept hospitality. Orders are given that Heracles be entertained sumptuously, away from the rooms of mourning. Chorus sings an ode in praise of the hospitable palace.

Hail, princely festal home,
Where a guest hath been ever free to roam!
In thee Apollo of the tuneful shell
Hath borne to dwell.
In thy halls did the Pythian deign
To become a keeper of flocks:
By the sloping steep,
To the pasturing sheep,
He piped a pastoral strain.
The spotted lynxes, too,
To the fold the spell of thy music drew;
Came tawny lions in a troop as well
From Othrys' dell.
Around the lyre did the dappled fawn,
O Phœbus, join in the dance:
With delight in the song
She came tripping along,
From pinewoods out on the lawn.

As the funeral procession leaves the palace, the king's aged father, Pheres, appears.

PHERES: I come, joint sufferer in thy woe, my son.
For thou has lost a noble, virtuous wife—
None will gainsay it; but thou must perforce
Endure this, though severe. These ornaments
Receive, and let her pass beneath the earth.
ADMETUS: Thou cam'st not to this burial asked by me,
Nor deem I thine the presence of a friend.
Thine ornaments she never shall put on:
She shall be buried needing naught of thine.
Then was thine hour for grief when I was doomed.
Thou stood'st aloof; though old, couldst suffer youth
To die: and wilt thou now bewail her death?
Thou wert not, then, true father of my flesh.
CHORUS: Forbear; enough the present suffering,
O son. Exasperate not a father's mind.
PHERES: Thou'rt passing insolent, and headstrong words
Dost hurl at us, but shalt not so be quit.
I did beget and rear thee of my house
An heir; but am not bound to die for thee.
This is no law from sires of mine bequeathed—
That sires should die for sons; it is not Greek.
Die not in my stead, nor do I for thee.
Dost joy to see light? Shall thy sire not joy?
Good sooth, our time in death I reckon long;
But life is brief: yet is it sweet withal.
Shamelessly hast thou struggled not to die;
Thou liv'st by overpassing doom assigned—
By *killing* her. And then my lack of soul
Rebuk'st, thou dastard, vanquished by thy wife,
Who died instead of thee, the handsome youth!
Smart this device that thou mayst never die,
If thou shalt coax a wife from time to time
To die for thee! Then thou revil'st thy friends
If they refuse thee, craven that thou art!

CHORUS: Too much is said both now and heretofore;
Refrain, old man, from slandering thy son.

But the unseemly wrangle continues, Admetus orders the old man away; neither father nor mother must approach his palace again. As the funeral procession moves away, Chorus chants a farewell.

Farewell, alas! to the brave.
O noblest heart, so bold to save!
May Hermes and the God beyond the grave
Receive thee kind!
If haply there it should
Go better with the good,
Then mayst thou, throned by her whom Hades wooed,
Fit fortune find!

ACT II

SCENE: *Again before the palace of* ADMETUS.

The front of the palace is deserted, when a servant comes out, and in a soliloquy gives a horrified account of Heracles's carousal. His head in a myrtle wreath, calling for goblet after goblet of wine, and full of merriment, the visitor is a violent discord in a house of lamentation. But Admetus has forbidden the servants to weep before Heracles. Suddenly the latter appears.

HERACLES: You, fellow, why that solemn, pensive look?
Come hither, that thou may'st the wiser grow.
Dost know the nature of the lot of man?
I ween not. Wherefore shouldst thou?
List to me.
Death is a debt that every mortal owes,
And of mankind there is not one aware
If through the coming morrow he shall live.
The path of fortune is a mystery
That none may teach and none may grasp by art.
This hearing then, instructed so by me,
Indulge thee; drink; thy life from day to day

Count as thine own; as fortune's, all the rest.
And worship as far sweetest of the gods
Our Cyprian Lady—she is full of grace.
Let go these cares and listen to my words,
If thou seest reason in them, as I think
Thou dost. Then bid excessive grief farewell.
Drink with us, treading present fortune down,
Thy brows engarlanded; and well I know
The plashing gurgle of the goblet will
Unmoor thee from thy grim and sullen mood.

The servant's remonstrances on the ill-timed nature of such mirth lead to further questions by Heracles, and to the revelation that it is the queen for whom Admetus is mourning. Chagrined and reproaching himself because he has been so easily misled, Heracles asks where is the place of burial.

SERVANT: By the straight road that to Larissa leads
Thou'lt find the hewn-stone tomb beyond the town.
HERACLES: O much enduring heart and soul of mine,
Now prove what son Electryon's daughter bore—
Alcmene the Tirynthian—unto Zeus.

During the absence of Heracles, Admetus returns in misery from the obsequies.

ADMETUS: O palace fair! how shall I dare
Pass into thee?
How in thee dwell since fortune fell
So black for me?
The change is great since once in state,
With bridal song,
'Tween torchlit lines from Pelian pines
I marched along
With my dear bride close at my side—
Our hands in one.
Then trooped a rout with merry shout
For her that's gone.
CHORUS: In the heyday of thy fortune
Came this grief to thee unschooled.

Thou thy life and soul didst rescue—
Died thy consort leaving love.
What is new herein? Full many
Death hath parted from a wife.

ADMETUS: My friends, I deem the fortune of my wife
Happier than mine, albeit it seems not so,
For naught of grief shall touch her any more;
From many toils she hath found glorious rest.
But I, who ought not live, o'erpassing doom,
Shall spend a mournful life. At last I know.

CHORUS: Myself did schools of literature frequent
And soared to dizzy height.
I handled many an argument,
Yet never did I light
On aught so strong as fate.
I found no balm in the tablets of Thrace
Which melodious Orpheus wrote,
Nor in drugs which Apollo gave to the race
Of Asclepius for antidote
The woes of man to abate.
The goddess, O prince, hath thee ta'en
In the bonds whence none may flee,
Yet, courage! for never thy tears and pain
Can recall the dead to thee.

Just at this moment Heracles returns, leading a veiled lady.

HERACLES: A friend unto a friend should frankly speak,
Admetus, and not hide complaints at heart
Unvoiced. Indeed I thought that coming close
Upon thy sorrow, I should rank as friend.
Thou toldest me not it was thy wife that lay
A corpse, but gave me welcome in thy home,
As if thou mournedst one of foreign birth.
I wreathed my head and to the gods I poured
Libations in that desolate house of thine.
I blame thee, yes, I blame thee, that 'twas so.

Still wish I not to pain thee in thine ills.
The cause why I turned back and hither came
I'll tell. This woman take and guard for me,
Till I bring here with me the Thracian mares,
When I have the Bistonian tyrant slain.
Prize of hard toil she came into my hands.

Admetus pleads that he had concealed Alcestis's death out of true feelings of hospitality. As to taking charge of the veiled lady, it would be too painful a reminder of his bereavement.

ADMETUS: This lady, if it may be, good my lord,
Bid some Thessalian else protect for thee,
Who has not had my loss, for many friends
Thou hast in Pheræ; mind me not of grief.
Woman, whoso thou be, know that in height
And form thou art Alcestis's counterpart.
Ah, me! remove in God's name from my sight
This woman, lest thou slay one who is slain.
For when I look on her, I seem to see
My wife. She makes my heart beat; from mine eyes
Gush founts of tears. Oh, wretched that I am!
At last I taste herein the gall of woe.

HERACLES: Pass not due limits, but bear patiently.

ADMETUS: 'Tis easier to advise than to endure.

HERACLES: What profit though thou choose for aye to moan!

ADMETUS: I know it too; but love impelleth me.

HERACLES: Time will bring balm—thy woe as yet is young.

ADMETUS: Time, sayst thou? Yea, if so be time is death.

HERACLES: 'Twill end, if thou wilt wed another bride.

ADMETUS: Peace! what a word to say! I could not think——

HERACLES: Canst hope to benefit the dead at all?

ADMETUS: Where'er she be, I owe her reverence.

HERACLES: Receive this lady in thy noble halls.

ADMETUS: Not so, by Zeus, who got thee, I entreat!

HERACLES: Consent: the favour may prove opportune.

ADMETUS: O that in strife thou ne'er hadst won this prize!

HERACLES: Yet when I win thou too dost win with me.

ADMETUS: Well said; but let the woman go away.

HERACLES: She shall, if need be: first see if she need.

ADMETUS: Needs must—if thou wilt not be wroth with me.

HERACLES: I too have reasons prompting urgency.

ADMETUS: Have then thy way; but it misliketh me.

HERACLES: Yet one day thou wilt thank me: only yield.

ADMETUS: If my house must receive her, lead her in.

HERACLES: I trust her only to thine own right hand.

ADMETUS: My lord, thou mak'st me act against my will.

HERACLES: Venture to stretch thy hand and touch thy guest.

ADMETUS: I do, as to the severed Gorgon's head.
[*With face averted he puts out his hand.*

HERACLES: Hast her?

ADMETUS: I have.

HERACLES: Yea, guard her, Thou shalt call
The son of Zeus one day a noble guest.
Look on her, if in aught thou think her like
Thy wife. Then, happy, bid farewell to grief.

ADMETUS: Ye gods! How speak? O miracle unhoped!
Here do I see my wife in verity?
Doth mocking joy from heaven madden me?

HERACLES: Not so: thou seest here thy consort true.

ADMETUS: See that this be no phantom from the shades.

HERACLES: Speak to her. Thou hast all thou didst desire.

ADMETUS: O face and form of her whom most I love!
Past hope I clasp what I thought ne'er to see.

HERACLES: 'Tis not vouchsafed thou hear a word from her,
Ere to the powers below Alcestis be
Unconsecrate—and the third morn return.

Heracles departs on his dangerous enterprise. Admetus issues orders for dances and sacrifice. Then the Chorus moralises.

CHORUS: Manifold forms hath fate divine:
Oft gods achieve where men despair;
Surmises fail to be fulfilled;
God finds a path where none appeared.
So strange the way this story went.

EVERYMAN

A Morality Play

Persons in the Play

EVERYMAN	DEATH
GOODS	GOOD DEEDS
BEAUTY	STRENGTH
FELLOWSHIP	KINDRED
KNOWLEDGE	CONFESSION
DISCRETION	FIVE WITS

ACT I

The play begins by the HIGH FATHER *in heaven sending His messenger* DEATH *to summon before him* EVERYMAN. GOD *complains that all creatures are to Him "unkind," and to make example will have* EVERYMAN *called into His presence.* DEATH *goes to the earth, and speaks to* EVERYMAN, *who asks what he would know. Then* DEATH *answers: "I am sent to thee from God out of His Majesty."*

EVERYMAN: What, sent to me?
DEATH: Yea, certainly.
Though thou have forgot Him here,
He thinketh on thee in the heavenly sphere,
As, or we depart, thou shalt know.
EVERYMAN: What desireth God of me?

Mr. Ernest Rhys describes this famous morality play, "Everyman," as "the noblest interlude of death the religious imagination of the middle ages has given to the stage." As it is the greatest of the manifold morality and miracle plays which were common throughout Europe in the three centuries preceding Shakespeare, so it represents the highest development of primitive drama before it gave way to stage plays written with consciously artistic sense. Its author is unknown; the popular

DEATH: That I shall show thee.
A reckoning He will needs have
Without any longer respite.
EVERYMAN: To give a reckoning longer leisure I crave;
This blind matter troubleth my wit.
DEATH: On thee thou must take a long journey;
Therefore thy book of count with thee thou bring;
For turn again thou cannot by no way,
And look thou be sure of thy reckoning.
For before God thou shalt answer, and show
Thy many bad deeds and good but a few;
How thou hast spent thy life, and in what wise,
Before the chief Lord of Paradise.
Have ado that we were in that way,
For, wete[1] thou well, thou shalt make none attournay.[2]
EVERYMAN: Full unready I am such reckoning to give.
I know thee not: what messenger art thou?
DEATH: I am Death, that no man dreadeth.
EVERYMAN: O Death, thou comest when I had thee least in mind;
In thy power it lieth me to save,
Yet of my good will I give thee, if ye will be kind,
Yea, a thousand pound shalt thou have,
And defer this matter till another day.
DEATH: Everyman, it may not be by no way;
I set not by gold, silver, nor riches,
Nor by pope, emperor, king, duke, and princes.
For and I would receive gifts great,
All the world I might get;

---

feeling assigns the play to a monk. Apparently its English form is a translation from a Dutch play entitled "Elckerlijk," published, according to guesswork, in 1520. Its object is well described by its sub-title: "A Moral Play, called a Treatise how the High Father of Heaven sendeth Death to summon every creature to come and give account of their lives in this world."

[1] Know. [2] Mediator.

But my custom is clean contrary.
I give thee no respite: come hence, and not tarry.
EVERYMAN: Alas, shall I have no longer respite?
I may say Death giveth no warning;
To think on thee, it maketh my heart sick,
For all unready is my book of reckoning.
But twelve year and I might have abiding,
My counting book I would make so clear
That my reckoning I should not need to fear.
Wherefore, Death, I pray thee, for God's mercy,
Spare me till I be provided of remedy.
DEATH: Thee availeth not to cry, weep, and pray:
But haste thee lightly that you were gone the journey,
And prove thy friends if thou can.
For, wete thou well, the tide abideth no man,
And in the world each living creature
For Adam's sin must die of nature.
EVERYMAN: Death, if I should this pilgrimage take,
And my reckoning surely make,
Show me, for saint Charity,
Should I not come again shortly?
DEATH: No, Everyman, and thou be once there,
Thou mayst never more come here,
Trust me verily.
EVERYMAN: O gracious God, in the high seat celestial,
Have mercy on me in this most need;
Shall I have no company from this vale terrestrial
Of mine acquaintance that way me to lead?
DEATH: Yea, if any be so hardy
That would go with thee and bear thee company.
Hie thee that you were gone to God's magnificence,
Thy reckoning to give before His presence
What, weenest thou, thy life is given thee,
And thy worldly goods also?
EVERYMAN: I had wend so, verily.
DEATH: Nay, nay; it was but lent thee;
For as soon as thou art go.

Another awhile shall have it, and then go therefro
Even as thou hast done.
Everyman, thou art mad; thou hast thy wits five,
And here on earth will not amend thy life,
For suddenly I do come.

EVERYMAN: O wretched caitiff, whither shall I flee
That I might 'scape this endless sorrow?
Now, gentle Death, spare me till to-morrow,
That I may amend me
With good advertisement.

DEATH: Nay, thereto I will not consent,
Nor no man will I respite,
But to the heart suddenly I shall smite
Without any advertisement.
And now out of thy sight I will me hie;
See thou make thee ready shortly.
For thou mayst say this is the day
That no man living may 'scape away.

EVERYMAN: Alas, I may well weep with sighs deep;
Now have I no manner of company
To help me in my journey, and me to keep;
And also my writing is full unready.
I would to God I had never be gete![1]
The time passeth; Lord, help, that all wrought;
For though I mourn it availeth nought.
The day passeth, and is almost a-go;
I wot not well what for to do.
To whom were I best my complaint to make?
What, and I to Fellowship thereof spake,
And showed him of this sudden change?
For in him is all mine affiance;
We have in the world so many a day
Be on good friends in sport and play.
I see him yonder, certainly;
I trust that he will bear me company;
Therefore to him will I speak to ease my sorrow.

[1] Been gotten.

Act II

Everyman *greets* Fellowship, *who pities him in his distress, and asks to be shown his grief, vowing* Everyman *shall find him a good friend in need. Though he go to hell he will not forsake him by the way.*

Everyman: I shall show you how it is.
Commanded I am to go a journey,
A long way, hard and dangerous,
And give a strait count without delay
Before the High Judge Adonai.[1]
Wherefore, I pray you, bear me company,
As ye have promised, in this journey.
Fellowship: That is matter indeed! Promise is duty.
But, and I should take such a voyage on me,
I know it well, it should be to my pain;
Also it makes afeard, certain.
But let us take course here as well as we can,
For your words would fear a strong man.
Everyman: Why, ye said if I had need
Ye would me never forsake, quick or dead,
Though it were to hell truly.
Fellowship: So I said, certainly.
But such pleasures be set aside, thee sooth to say;
And also, if we took such a journey,
When should we come again?
Everyman: Nay, never again till the day of doom.
Fellowship: In faith, then will not I come there!
Who hath you these tidings brought?
Everyman: Indeed, Death was with me here.
Fellowship: Now, by God that all hath bought,
If Death were the messenger,

[1] God.

For no man that is living to-day
I will not go that loath journey—
Not for the father that begat me!
EVERYMAN: Ye promised otherwise, pardie.
FELLOWSHIP: I wot well I say so truly;
And yet if thou wilt eat, and drink, and make good cheer,
I would not forsake you while the day is clear,
Trust me verily!
EVERYMAN: Yea, thereto ye would be ready;
To go to mirth, solace, and play,
Your mind will sooner apply
Than to bear me company in my long journey.
FELLOWSHIP: Now, in good faith, I will not that way.
But and thou wilt murder, or any man kill,
In that will I help thee with a good will!
EVERYMAN: Oh, that is a simple advice indeed!
Gentle fellow, help me in my necessity;
We have loved long, and now I need,
And now, gentle Fellowship, remember me.
FELLOWSHIP: Whether ye have loved me or no,
By St. John I will not with thee go.
EVERYMAN: Yet I pray thee, take the labour, and do so much for me
To bring me forward, for saint Charity,
And comfort me till I come without the town.
FELLOWSHIP: Nay, and thou would give me a new gown
I will not a foot with thee go;
But and you had tarried I would not have left thee so.
And as now, God speed thee in thy journey,
For from thee I will depart as fast as I may.
EVERYMAN: Whither away, Fellowship? Wilt thou forsake me?
FELLOWSHIP: Yea, by my fay, to God I betake thee.
EVERYMAN: Farewell, good Fellowship, for this my heart is sore;
Adieu for ever, I shall see thee no more.

FELLOWSHIP: In faith, Everyman, farewell now at the end;
For you I will remember that parting is mourning.

ACT III

EVERYMAN *now bewails his sad fate, and perceives that* FELLOWSHIP *is but the companion of prosperity and pleasantness. He seeks* KINDRED *and* GOODS, *but both profess themselves unable to accompany him on so desolate a journey. All are false friends. No one will go with him. The dreadful journey must be made in still more dreadful solitariness. At last he bethinks him of his* GOOD DEEDS, *although he fears that "she is so weak that she can neither go nor speak." However, he calls to her in desperation, and she makes answer.*

GOOD DEEDS: Here I lie cold in the ground;
Thy sins hath me sore bound,
That I cannot stir.
EVERYMAN: O Good Deeds, I stand in fear!
I must you pray of counsel,
For help now should come right well.
GOOD DEEDS: Everyman, I have understanding
That ye be summoned account to make
Before Messias, of Jerusalem, King.
EVERYMAN: Therefore I come to you, my moan to make;
I pray you, that ye will go with me.
GOOD DEEDS: I would full fain, but I cannot stand verily.
EVERYMAN: Why, is there anything on you fall?
GOOD DEEDS: Yea, sir, I may thank you of all.
If ye had perfectly cheered me,
Your book of account now full ready had be.

Look, the books of your works and deeds eke;
Oh, see how they lie under the feet,
To your soul's heaviness!
EVERYMAN: Good Deeds, I pray you, help me in this need,
Or else I am for ere damned indeed;
Therefore help me to make reckoning
Before the Redeemer of all thing,
That King is, and was, and ever shall.
GOOD DEEDS: Everyman, I am sorry for your fall,
And fain would I help you, and I were able.
EVERYMAN: Good Deeds, your counsel I pray you give me.
GOOD DEEDS: That shall I do verily;
Though that on my feet I may not go,
I have a sister, that shall with you also,
Called Knowledge, which shall with you abide,
To help you to make that dreadful reckoning.
[KNOWLEDGE *now enters and offers to go with him.*
KNOWLEDGE: Everyman, I will go with thee, and be thy guide,
In thy most need to go by thy side.
EVERYMAN: In good condition I am now in everything,
And am wholly content with this good thing;
Thanked be my Creator.
GOOD DEEDS: And when he hath brought thee there,
Where thou shalt heal thee of thy smart.
Then go with your reckoning and your Good Deeds together.
For to make you joyful at heart
Before the Blessed Trinity.
EVERYMAN: My Good Deeds, gramercy;
I am well content, certainly,
With your words sweet.
KNOWLEDGE: Now we go together lovingly
To Confession, that cleansing river.

EVERYMAN: For joy I weep; I would we were there;
But, I pray you, give me cognition
Where dwelleth that holy man, Confession.
KNOWLEDGE: In the house of salvation;
We shall find him in that place,
That shall us comfort by God's grace.
Lo, this is Confession; kneel down and ask mercy,
For he is in good conceit with God Almighty.
[*Addressing* CONFESSION, EVERYMAN *exclaims:*
EVERYMAN: O glorious fountain that all uncleanness doth clarify,
Wash from me the spots of vices unclean,
That on me no sin may be seen;
I come with knowledge for my redemption
Repent with hearty and full contrition;
For I am commanded a pilgrimage to take,
And great accounts before God to make.
Now, I pray you, Shrift, mother of salvation,
Help my good deeds for my piteous exclamation.
CONFESSION: I know your sorrow well, Everyman;
Because with Knowledge ye come to me.
I will you comfort as well as I can,
And a precious jewel I will give thee,
Called penance, wise voider of adversity;
Therewith shall your body chastised be
With abstinence and perseverance in God's service;
Here shall you receive that scourge of me,
Which is penance strong, that ye must endure.
KNOWLEDGE: Keep him in this voyage,
And by that time Good Deeds will be with thee.
But in any wise, be sure of mercy,
For your time draweth fast, and ye will savéd be;
Ask God's mercy, and He will grant truly,
When with the scourge of penance man doth him bind.
The oil of forgiveness then shall he find.
EVERYMAN: Thanked be God for His gracious work!
For now I will my penance begin:

This hath rejoiced and lighted my heart,
Though the knots be painful and hard within.
KNOWLEDGE: Everyman, look your penance that ye fulfil,
What pain that ever it to you be,
And Knowledge shall give you counsel at will
How your accounts ye shall make clearly.
EVERYMAN: In the name of the Holy Trinity,
My body sore punished shall be:
Take this body for the sin of the flesh,
Also thou delightest to go gay and fresh,
And in the way of damnation thou did me bring;
Therefore suffer now strokes and punishing.
Now of penance I will wade the water clear,
To save me from purgatory, that sharp fire.
GOOD DEEDS: I thank God, now I can walk and go;
And am delivered of my sickness and woe.
Therefore with Everyman I will go, and not spare;
His good works I will help him to declare.
KNOWLEDGE: Now, Everyman, be merry and glad
Your Good Deeds cometh now; ye may not be sad.
EVERYMAN: My heart is light, and shall be evermore;
Now will I smite faster than I did before.
Welcome, my Good Deeds; now I hear thy voice,
I weep for every sweetness of love.
KNOWLEDGE: Be no more sad, but ever rejoice,
God seeth thy living in His throne above;
Put on this garment to thy behove,
Which is wet with your tears,
Or else before God you may it miss,
When you to your journey's end come shall.
EVERYMAN: Gentle Knowledge, what do you it call?
KNOWLEDGE: It is a garment of sorrow:
From pain it will you borrow;
Contrition it is
That getteth forgiveness;
It pleaseth God passing well.

GOOD DEEDS: Everyman, will you wear it for your heal?

EVERYMAN: Now blessed be Jesu, Mary's Son!
For now have I on true contrition.
And let us go now without tarrying.

ACT IV

But before EVERYMAN *can go on his journey* GOOD DEEDS *tells him he must lead with him three persons of great might*—DISCRETION, STRENGTH, *and* BEAUTY. *And* KNOWLEDGE *bids him call to mind his* FIVE WITS *as for his counsellors. Called together, they all come, and promise to be in his company at his will on his journey, and to give him virtuous monition that all shall be well.* EVERYMAN *giveth thanks to God, and prayeth his friends that he and they go without longer respite.*

EVERYMAN: Now set each of you on this rod your hand,
And shortly follow me.
I go before, there I would be, God be our guide.
Alas, I am so faint I may not stand,
My limbs under me do fold;
Friends, let us not turn again to this land,
Not for all the world's gold,
For into this cave must I creep
And turn to the earth and there to sleep.

BEAUTY: What, into this grave? Alas!

EVERYMAN: Yea, there shall you consume more and less.

BEAUTY: And what, should I smother here?

EVERYMAN: Yea, by my faith, and never more appear.
In this world live no more we shall,
But in heaven before the highest Lord of all.

BEAUTY: I cross out all this; adieu by Saint John;
I take my cap in my lap and am gone.

EVERYMAN: What, Beauty, whither will ye?

BEAUTY: Peace, I am deaf; I look not behind me,
Not, and thou would give me all the gold in thy chest.
EVERYMAN: Alas, whereto may I trust?
Beauty goeth fast away hie;
She promised with me to live and die.
STRENGTH: Everyman, I will thee also forsake and deny.
Thy game liketh me not at all.
EVERYMAN: Why, then ye will forsake me all?
Sweet Strength, tarry a little space.
STRENGTH: Nay, sir, by the rood of grace I will hie me from thee fast
Though thou weep till thy heart brast.
EVERYMAN: Ye would ever bide by me, ye said.
STRENGTH: Yea, I have you far enough conveyed;
Ye be old enough, I understand,
Your pilgrimage to take on hand;
I repent me that I hither came.
EVERYMAN: Strength, you to displease I am to blame;
Will you break promise that is debt?
STRENGTH: In faith, I care not;
Thou art but a fool to complain,
You spend your speech and waste your brain;
Go, thrust thee into the ground.
EVERYMAN: I had went surer I should you have found.
He that trusteth in his Strength
She him deceiveth at the length.
Both Strength and Beauty forsaketh me
Yet they promised me fair and lovingly.
DISCRETION: Everyman, I will after Strength be gone.
EVERYMAN: Why, Discretion, will ye forsake me?
DISCRETION: Yea, in faith, I will go from thee.
For when Strength goeth before
I follow after evermore.
EVERYMAN: Oh, all thing faileth, save God alone;
Beauty, Strength, and Discretion;

For when Death bloweth his blast,
They all run from me full fast.
FIVE WITS: Everyman, my leave now of thee I take;
I will follow the other, for here I thee forsake.
EVERYMAN: Alas! then may I wail and weep,
For I took you for my best friend.
FIVE WITS: I will no longer thee keep;
Now farewell, and there an end.
EVERYMAN: O Jesu, help, all hath forsaken me!
GOOD DEEDS: Nay, Everyman, I will abide with thee,
I will not forsake thee indeed;
Thou shalt find me a good friend at need.
EVERYMAN: Gramercy, Good Deeds; now may I true friends see.
They have forsaken me every one;
I loved them better than my Good Deeds alone.
Knowledge, will ye forsake me also?
KNOWLEDGE: Yea, Everyman, when ye to Death do go:
But not yet for no manner of danger.
EVERYMAN: Gramercy, Knowledge, with all my heart.
KNOWLEDGE: Nay, yet I will not from hence depart,
Till I see where ye shall be come.
EVERYMAN: Methinketh, alas, that I must be gone,
To make my reckoning, and my debts pay,
For I see my time is nigh spent away.
Take example, all ye that this do hear or see
How they that I loved best do forsake me,
Except my Good Deeds that bideth truly.
GOOD DEEDS: All earthly things is but vanity,
Beauty, Strength, and Discretion do man forsake,
Foolish friends and kinsmen, that fair spake,
All fleeth save Good Deeds, and that am I.
EVERYMAN: Have mercy on me, God most mighty;
And stand by me, thou mother and maid, holy Mary.
EVERYMAN: Here I cry God mercy.
GOOD DEEDS: Short our end, and minish our pain;
Let us go and never come again.

EVERYMAN: Into thy hands, Lord, my soul I commend;
Receive it, Lord, that it be not lost.
As thou me broughtest, so me defend
And save me from the fiend's boast,
That I may appear with that blessed host,
That I shall be saved at the day of doom.
In manus tuas—of might's most
For ever—*commendo spiritum meum.*

KNOWLEDGE: Now hath he suffered that we all shall endure;
The Good Deeds shall make all sure.
Now hath he made ending;
Methinketh that I hear angels sing
And make great joy and melody
Where Everyman's soul received shall be.

ANGEL: Come, excellent elect spouse, to Jesu:
Here above thou shalt go
Because of thy singular virtue;
Now the soul is taken the body fro;
Thy reckoning is crystal-clear.
Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,
Unto the which all ye shall come
That liveth well before the day of doom.

. . . . . .

Thus endeth this moral play of Everyman.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Faust

Persons in the Drama

FAUST
MEPHISTOPHELES
VALENTINE, *Margaret's brother*
MARGARET
MARTHA
ANGELS, SPIRITS, WITCHES

ACT I

Night. FAUST, *sitting restless, at his desk.*

FAUST: There, now, I've toiled my way quite through
Law, medicine, and philosophy;
And, to my sorrow, also thee,
Theology, with much ado;
And here I stand, poor human fool,
As wise as when I went to school.

"Faust" may justly head all Goethe's works, and may be ranked among the world's most incomparable literature. It deals with the deepest problems that can engage the mind of man. The inward struggles of Faust, suggesting those of Hamlet, and the antagonism of the sensual and moral principles, make an irresistible appeal to all human kind. It was the labour of practically a lifetime, the idea of adapting the famous legend of "Doctor Faustus" coming to Goethe in his earliest manhood. The first part of the work was accomplished in fragments, and as such was published in 1790. It then attracted little attention, Heine saying of it, "There are fine passages in it, but with them there are such things as only he could give to the world who takes other men to be blockheads." By 1806 the first part was completed, and two years later published at Tübingen; and it was not until between 1825 and 1831 that Goethe (see Vol. IV, p. 253) finished his great life-work, begun sixty years before.

Here like a kennel'd cur I lie!
Therefore, the magic art I'll try,
From spirit's might and mouth to draw,
Mayhap, some key to Nature's law.

He opens the book, turns it over impatiently, until he beholds the sign of the Spirit of the Earth, which he pronounces with a mysterious air. The spirit appears in a flame, and Faust shrinks away. The spirit addresses him scornfully, and just as Faust takes courage to reply, vanishes with the words:

SPIRIT: Thou'rt like the spirit whom thou comprehendest,
Not me! [*Vanishes.*

FAUST: Not thee! Whom, then? I, image of the Godhead, dwarfed by thee!
I, God's own image that already seemed
To gaze where Truth's eternal mirror gleamed.
And, clean divested of this cumbering clay,
Basked in the bliss of heaven's vivific ray.
What sharp reproof my hot presumption found!
One word of thunder smote me to the ground.

He continues his soliloquy on the vanity of all learning and the emptiness of existence.

But what is this? There, in the corner; why
Does that flask play the magnet to mine eye?
I greet thee, matchless phial; and with devotion
I take thee down, and in thy mellow potion
I reverence human wit and human skill:
Here is a juice intoxicates the soul.

[*A sound of bells and distant choir-singing make him pause as he is about to drink the potion.*

FAUST: What seek ye here, ye gently swaying tones,
Sweet seraph-music 'mid a mortal's groans?
This hymn proclaimed the sport of youthful days
And merry-makings when the spring began;
Now memory's potent spell my spirit sways,
And thoughts of childhood rule the full-grown man:

Oh! sound thou on, thou sweet celestial strain,
The tear doth gush, Earth claims her truant son again!
CHOIR OF ANGELS: Christ is risen
From Death's corrupting thrall,
Break from your prison
And follow His call!

ACT II

SCENE I.—FAUST, *who has been walking before the gates of the town, enters his studio with a poodle which has attracted his attention by its strange behaviour, and has followed him home. Its behaviour increases in strangeness, and* FAUST, *asking himself what spectre he has brought into the house, exorcises the poodle, which cringes behind the stove, Clouds appear, and as they vanish,* MEPHISTOPHELES *steps forward dressed as an itinerant scholar.*

MEPHISTOPHELES: What's all the noise about? I'm here at leisure
To work your worship's will and pleasure.
FAUST: What is thy name?
MEPHISTOPHELES: I am a part of that primordial night
Which always wills the wrong, and always works the right.
FAUST: You speak in riddles: the interpretation?
MEPHISTOPHELES: I am the Spirit of Negation.
FAUST: Thou nam'st thyself a part, yet standest wholly here.
MEPHISTOPHELES: Part of the part I am that erst was all,
Part of the darkness, from whose primal pall
Was born the light, the proud, rebellious light
Which now disputeth with its mother night
Her rank and room i' the world by ancient right.

If 'tis your pleasure so, I will remain,
But on condition that the time be passed
In worthy wise, and you consent to see
Some cunning sleights of spirit-craft from me.

FAUST: Thy fancy suits me well. Thou may'st commence,
So that thy dainty tricks but please the sense.

Mephistopheles calls upon the spirits, who sing without until Faust falls into slumber. Faust awakens, and finds the room empty.

SCENE II.—FAUST'S *study as before.*

FAUST: Who's there to break my peace once more? Come in!

[*Enter* MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES: I come to give you good advice.
And hope we'll understand each other.
The idle fancies to expel,
That in your brain make such a pother.
At your service behold one here,
Of noble blood—a cavalier;
Here at my side a long, sharp sword.
Now listen to a well-meant word;
Do thou the like, and follow me,
All unembarrassed thus and free,
To mingle in the busy scenes
Of life, and know what living means.

FAUST: Too old am I to be content with play,
Too young from every longing to be free.
What can the world hold forth for me to gain?
Abstain, it saith, and still it saith, abstain!
Thus my existence is a load of woes,
Death my best friend, and life my worst of foes.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Cease, then, with thine own peevish whim to play,
That like a vulture makes thy life its play.
Here do I offer, at thy side,

Thy steps through mazy life to guide;
And wilt thou join in this adventure,
I bind myself by strong indenture,
Here on the spot, with thee to go.
I bind myself to be thy servant here,
And wait with sleepless eyes upon thy pleasure,
If when we meet again in *yonder* sphere,
Thou wilt repay my service in like measure.

FAUST: Poor devil, what hast thou to give
By which a human soul can live?
If thou canst trick me with a toy
To say sincerely I *enjoy*,
Then may my latest sand be run!
A wager on it!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Done!
One thing remains! Black upon white,
A line or two, to make the bargain tight.
Paper or parchment, any scrap will do,
Then write in blood your signature thereto.

[FAUST *signs the paper.*

Blood is a juice of most peculiar virtue.

ACT III

SCENE I.—*Auerbach's wine-cellar, Leipzig. A bout of merry fellows, who are discovered boisterously singing and drinking. Enter* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES: First thing of all I bring you here,
Into a company of jolly cheer,
That you may learn how men contrive
Without much thought or care to live.

FAUST: Be greeted, gentlemen!

Faust and Mephistopheles join in the merry proceedings, Mephistopheles exchanging banter with the merry fellows, and singing to them at their request. He then complains about the wine, proposes to give them of his own, and asks for a gimlet, with which he bores holes in the edge of one of the tables.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Now every man may taste of what he chooses.

Fetch me some wax, to make the stoppers ready.

[MEPHISTOPHELES *bores, and closes the holes with the stoppers.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*having bored and stopped up all the holes*): Grapes on the vine grow!

Horns on the goat!

The wine is juicy, the vine is of wood,

The wooden table can give it as good.

Now draw the corks and qua the wine!

ALL (*drawing the corks and quaffing the liquor*): O blessed stream! O font divine!

[*They drink freely, and sing.*

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST): Look at the fellows now! Are they not merry?

FAUST: I feel inclined to go!—'tis getting late.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Soon shall we have a glorious revelation

Of the pure beast in man, if you but wait.

One of the company drinks carelessly, and the wine falls to the ground and becomes flame. Crying, "Help! Fire! The devil's here! Death and Damnation!" they draw their knives and attack Mephistopheles.

MEPHISTOPHELES: False be eye, and false be ear!

Change the sense, and change the place!

Now be there, and now be here!

They look as thunderstruck, and stare at one another; then speak of strange visions of vineyards, and seize each other by the nose, lifting up their knives. Mephistopheles vanishes with Faust.

SCENE II.—*Witches' kitchen. Apes and fantastic creatures seen in the smoke. Strange implements all around. Enter* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST: I cannot brook this brainless bedlam stuff!

And must it be that I shall cast my slough

In this hot-bed of all unreasoned doing?
Shall an old beldam give me what I lack?
Could you not brew the drink yourself as well?

MEPHISTOPHELES: A precious pastime that indeed! Meanwhile
I had built bridges many a German mile.
Not art, and science strict, are here enough,
But patience too, and perseverance tough.

While Mephistopheles talks to the apes and sits down near the fire by the pot, Faust is looking in a mirror, alternately approaching and retiring from it.

FAUST: What see I here? What heavenly image bright,
Within this magic mirror, chains my sight?
Alas! when I would move one step more near.
To breathe her balmy atmosphere,
She seems to melt and disappear.
Oh, she is fair beyond all type of human!
Is't possible; can this be simple woman?

MEPHISTOPHELES: I know how to procure you such a one,
Whence thou mayst drink delight in brimming measure,
And blest the man for whom Fate shall decide
To lead home such a treasure as his bride!

Faust continues to gaze in the mirror. Meanwhile the kettle boils over. A great flame arises and runs up the chimney, through which the witch appears with a terrible noise.

THE WITCH: Now say, what would you have with me?

MEPHISTOPHELES: A glass of your restoring liquor,
That makes an old man's blood run quicker.

THE WITCH: Most willingly. Here I have got a phial
Of which myself at times make trial.

[*She draws a circle, and, after placing many curious things within it, declaims from a large book an incantation. Then she pours the beverage into a cup.*

While FAUST *brings it to his mouth a light flame arises.*

MEPHISTOPHELES: Come, quaff it boldly, without thinking!
The draught will make thy heart to burn with love.

[*The* WITCH *looses the circle.* FAUST *steps out.*

MEPHISTOPHELES: Come quickly out; you must not rest

FAUST (*turning again towards the mirror*): Indulge me with one glance—one moment spare!
It was a virgin form, surpassing fair!

MEPHISTOPHELES: No, no! With my good aid thou soon shalt see
The paragon of women bodily.
(*Aside*) Anon, if this good potion does its duty,
He'll see in every wench the Trojan beauty.

SCENE III.—*A street.* FAUST. MARGARET *passes.*

FAUST: My fair young lady, may I dare
To offer you my escort home?

MARGARET: I am no lady, sir, nor fair,
And need no escort going home. [*Exit.*

FAUST: By heaven, this child is passing fair!
A fairer never crossed my view;
Of such a modest, gentle air,
And with a dash of pertness, too.

[*Enter* MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST: Hark! You must get the girl for me.

MEPHISTOPHELES: She's only just come from confession,
Where she received a full remission.
'Tis a most guileless thing that goes
For very nothing to the priest.
My power does not extend to those.

FAUST: Fetch me something that breathed her air!
Her home, her chamber, plant me there!

MEPHISTOPHELES: We shall not lose a single minute; I know her room—thou shalt enjoy thee in it.

FAUST: Can we go now?

MEPHISTOPHELES: No; we must wait till night.

FAUST: Go fetch a present for my heart's delight.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A small, neat chamber.*

MARGARET (*plaiting and putting up her hair*): I wonder who the gentleman could be,
That on the street accosted me to-day!
He looked a gallant cavalier, and gay,
And must be of a noble family. [*Exit.*

Faust and Mephistopheles enter. Faust examines the room, while Mephistopheles goes to fetch a casket with jewels, which on his return he places in Margaret's cupboard. They leave the room, and Margaret returns with a lamp.

MARGARET (*who undresses, singing a ballad; then opens the cupboard and sees the casket*): How came the pretty casket here? No doubt
I locked the press when I went out.
What have we here? Good heavens! See!
What a display of finery!
I wonder how the necklace would suit me!
Who may the lord of all this splendour be?

[*She puts on the necklace, and looks at herself in the glass.*

Were but the earrings mine to wear!
It gives one such a different air.
What boots the beauty of the poor?
'Tis very beautiful, to be sure,
But, without riches, little weighs;
They praise you, but half pity while they praise.
Gold is the pole to which all point: the whole
Big world hangs on gold. Alas, we poor!

SCENE V.—MARTHA'S *house.*

Margaret tells Martha of the casket she found in her cupboard, which, coming to her mother's sight, was offered to the Church; and of a second casket she has just found in the same place. Martha advises her to keep it hidden from her mother.

Enter Mephistopheles, who tells Martha that he is the bearer of her dead husband's last greetings; he arranges to meet her and Margaret in the evening in the garden behind the house, whither he will also bring "a gallant youth—a perfect cavalier," his friend, who would bear witness to her husband's death.

ACT IV

SCENE I.—MARTHA'S *garden.* MARGARET *on* FAUST'S *arm;* MARTHA *with* MEPHISTOPHELES, *walking up and down.*

MARGARET: I feel it well, 'tis from pure condescension
You pay to one like me so much attention.

FAUST: One look from thee, one word delights me more
Than all the world's high-vaunted lore.

[*They pass on.*

MARTHA: And you, sir, will it still
Be your delight from place to place to roam?
Think! As a stiff old bachelor to die
Has never yet done good to anyone.

MEPHISTOPHELES: I see ahead, and fear such wretched fate.

MARTHA: Then, sir, take warning ere it be too late.

[*They pass on.*

FAUST: You are then much alone?

MARGARET: Our household is but small, I own,
And yet must be attended to.
We keep no maid, I have the whole to do.
My brother is a soldier; he
Is at the wars; my little sister's dead;
Poor thing! It caused me many an hour of pain
To see it pine, and droop its little head.

FAUST: An angel, if like thee!

[*They pass on.*

MEPHISTOPHELES: A house and hearth, we have been often told,
With a good wife, is worth its weight in gold.

MARTHA: I ask, sir, have you never felt the want?

MEPHISTOPHELES: A good reception I have always found.

MARTHA: My meaning still you strangely miss.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Alas, that I should be so blind!
One thing I plainly see: that you are very kind.

[*They pass on.*

FAUST: You knew me, then, you little angel! straight,
When you beheld me at the garden gate?

MARGARET: Marked you it not? You saw my downward look.

FAUST: And you forgive the liberty I took
When I, with forward boldness more than meet,
Thus ventured to address you in the street?

MARGARET: One thing I know, myself I sharply chid,
That I could treat you then no harshlier than I did.

FAUST: Sweet love!

MARGARET: Let go! (*She plucks a star-flower, and pulls the petals off one by one.*) He loves me, yes—he loves me, no. (*She continues murmuring; then, with manifest delight*) He loves me, yes!

FAUST: Yes, child, the fair flower-star hath answered yes.
In this the judgment of the gods approves thee;
He loves thee! Know'st thou what it means?
He loves thee!

[*He seizes her by both hands. She presses his hands, frees herself, and runs away. He stands for a moment thoughtfully, then follows.*

MARTHA (*coming up*): 'Tis getting late.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Yes, and we must away.

MARTHA: I fain would have you stay.
But where is our young pair?
MEPHISTOPHELES: Like wanton birds of summer, through the air
I saw them dart away.
MARTHA: He seems well pleased with her.
MEPHISTOPHELES: And she with him. 'Tis thus the world goes.

SCENE II.—*A summer-house in the garden.* MARGARET *hides behind the door.*

MARGARET: He comes!
FAUST: Ha, ha! Thou cunning soul, and thou
Wouldst trick me thus; but I have caught thee now.
[*He kisses her.*
MARGARET: Thou best of men, with my whole heart I love thee!
[MEPHISTOPHELES *enters and tells* FAUST *that it is time for them to go. Exeunt both.*
MARGARET (*alone*): Dear God! What such a man as this
Can think on: all and everything!
I wonder what a man, so learned as he,
Can find in a poor simple girl like me. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—MARGARET'S *room.* MARGARET *alone, at a spinning-wheel.*

MARGARET: My rest is gone, my heart is sore;
Peace find I never, and never more.
My bosom swells, and pants for him.
O that I might clasp him, and cling to him!
And kiss him, and kiss him the live-long day,
And on his kisses melt away!

SCENE IV.—*In this scene,* MARGARET *and one of her friends, with water-pitchers at the well, discuss a fallen girl, their friend,* MARGARET *taking up her defence.*

MARGARET (*going homewards*): How could I once so boldly chide
When a poor maiden stepped aside!
And now myself am what I chid before!
Yet was each step that lured my slipping feet
So good, so lovely, so enticing sweet!

SCENE V.—*An enclosed area.* MARGARET *kneeling before an image of the* Mater dolorosa.

MARGARET: O Mother rich in sorrows, bend down to hear my cry!
O bend thee, gracious Mother, to my sore agony!
O save me, Mother of Sorrows! Unto my prayer give heed,
By all the swords that pierced thee, O save me in my need!

SCENE VI.—*Night. Street before* MARGARET'S *door. Enter* VALENTINE, *her brother.*

VALENTINE: Shall every boor, with gibe and jeer,
Turn up his nose when I appear?
And though I bruised them in a mortar,
I could not say that they are wrong.
What comes apace? What creeps along?
A pair of them comes slinking by.
If 'tis the man I look for, I
Will dust his coat so well he'll not,
By Jove! go living from the spot. [*Retires.*

Enter Faust and Mephistopheles in conversation. Then Mephistopheles sings to the guitar, and is set upon by Valentine, who smashes the guitar with his sword. Faust and Valentine fight, Mephistopheles parrying Valentine's thrusts. Valentine falls with a groan. Exeunt Mephistopheles and Faust. The noise

has attracted a concourse of people, including Martha and Margaret. They surround the dying soldier, who, with his last breath curses his sister.

MARGARET: Brother, thou mak'st me feel a hell of pain!

VALENTINE: I tell thee, all thy tears are vain!
When with thy honour thou didst part,
Thou dealt the blow that pierced my heart.
I go through death, with fearless mood,
To meet my God, as a soldier should. [*Dies.*

SCENE VII.—*A cathedral. Mass, organ, song.* MARGARET *amid a crowd,* EVIL SPIRIT *behind her.*

EVIL SPIRIT: How different, Margaret, was thy case,
When, in thine innocence, thou dist kneel
Before the altar, and from the well-worn book
Didst lisp thy prayers!

MARGARET: Woe, woe, that I might shake away my thoughts! [*Choir and organ.*

EVIL SPIRIT: Terror doth seize thee! The trumpet sounds!
The graves quake! And thy heart,
From its rest of ashes, to fiery pain
Created again, quivers to life. [*Choir.*

MARGARET: I feel so straitened! The pillar shafts
Enclasp me round! The vault is closing o'er me! Air! [*Choir.*

EVIL SPIRIT: The blessèd turn their looks away,
And the pure shudder from touch of thee! Woe!

MARGARET: Neighbour, your smelling-salts! [*She falls down in a swoon.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—*A cloudy day. The fields.* FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST: In misery! In despair! Wandering in hopeless wretchedness over the wide earth, and at last made

prisoner! Poor, miserable girl! Thou treacherous and worthless spirit! A prisoner! In irredeemable misery! She is left in hopeless wretchedness to die!

MEPHISTOPHELES: She is not the first.

FAUST: Dog! Abominable monster!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Art done?

FAUST: Deliver her or woe thee! The direst of curses lie on thee for ever!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Who was it that plunged her into ruin? I or thou?

FAUST: Bring me to her! She shall be free!

MEPHISTOPHELES: I'll lead thee thither, and what I can do, that I will do. Mark me! Have I all power in heaven and on earth? I will cloud the wits of the warders, and thou mayst seize the keys, and bring her out with the hand of man. I wait for you with the magic horses to ensure your escape.

SCENE II.—*A prison.* FAUST *with a bundle of keys and a lamp before an iron door.*

FAUST: Here dwells she now behind this damp, cold wall,
And her delusion was her only crime!
Quick! The delay but brings her death more nigh.

[*He seizes the lock.* MARGARET *is heard singing from within. He opens the door.*

MARGARET (*hiding herself on the bed*): Woe, woe, they come! To bitter death they call!

FAUST (*softly*): Hush, hush! I come to free thee from their thrall!

MARGARET (*on her knees*): Who gave thee, hangman, such a power
To drag me from my cell at midnight hour?

[*She stands up.*

So young, so very young, am I,
And must already die!

FAUST: That I should live to see such depth of woe!

MARGARET: Thou hast me now completely in thy might.
Only first give me time to suckle my sweet child.
I hugged it the whole weary night;
They took't from me in very spite,
And now they say I murdered the sweet child.
FAUST (*aloud*): Gretchen! Gretchen!
MARGARET (*attentive*): That was the loved one's voice!
[*She springs up; the chains, which* FAUST *has unlocked, fall away.*
Where is he? Where? I heard him call on me.
FAUST: 'Tis I.
MARGARET: 'Tis thou! O say it yet again!
[*Clasping him.*
And these vile chains thou breakest
And me again unto thy bosom takest?
FAUST: Come, come! The night sinks fast. Come, follow me!
MARGARET: My mother slept a sleep profound! I drugged her to't.
My little babe I drowned!
Was it not heaven's boon to me and thee?
Give me thy hand, thy dear, dear hand!
Alas! but it is wet! Wipe it, for it is wet
With blood! O God! What hast thou done?
MEPHISTOPHELES (*appearing from without*): Up! Or no help can save!
Profitless whining, whimpering, and prating!
Meanwhile my eager steeds are waiting.
MARGARET: What's that from the floor uprising there?
'Tis he! 'Tis he! Oh, send his hateful face
Away! What seeks he in this holy place?
He comes for me!
FAUST: No! Thou shalt live.
MARGARET: Judgment of God! To Thee my soul I give.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST): Come, come, else will I leave you to your fate!

MARGARET: Thine am I, Father! Oh, shut not the gate
Of mercy on me! O ye angels, now
Encamp around me, and protect me now!
Henry, I tremble when I think on thee.

MEPHISTOPHELES: She is judged!

VOICE (*from above*): Is saved!

MEPHISTOPHELES (*to* FAUST): Hither to me!

VOICE (*from within, dying away*): Henry! Henry!

(GOETHE: *Continued in Vol. XVII.*)